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NORTH CAROLINA FOLKLORE

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The North Carolina Folklore Society, organized in 1913, encourages the collection, study, and publication of North Carolina folklore. *NCF*, founded in 1948, is issued regularly in May and November. From 1954 to 1964 it was edited by Arthur Palmer Hudson.

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NOTES

This special issue of *North Carolina Folklore* contains eight of the entries submitted last fall in the Student Folklore Contest for North Carolina college students, undergraduate and graduate. The $100 prize awarded Jerry D. Joines, as well as the publication of this special issue, would not have been possible without a grant made to the editors of *North Carolina Folklore* by the North Carolina Arts Council. Three essays submitted in the contest will appear later in 1972: a study of folklore in Thomas Hardy's poetry by Lena Dula Mayberry of N. C. State; a collection of folklore from Harkers Island by William Dale of UNC at Chapel Hill; and "The Fireball," a second submission by Mary Herrera of UNC at Charlotte. The editors were vastly pleased with the results of the contest. Most of the entries not accepted for publication—and some excellent essays were among them—were those having no relevance to North Carolina folklore. While the Student Contest will not be an annual event, the editors hope that another one can be held a few years from now.

The seven volumes of the *Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore* (1952-1964) are again available from the Duke University Press, Durham, at $95 for the set, or $15 each volume.

On a snowy afternoon last December 3rd, the Sixtieth Session of the North Carolina Folklore Society was held in Raleigh. President Amos Abrams' program was, everyone stoutly declared, the best one yet, and no one paid the slightest attention to the wintry weather outside the ballroom at the Hotel Sir Walter. There was music and dancing, games and animal sounds. A new slate of officers was elected (see the last page back), and the secretary-treasurer reported the Society was solvent. The constitution was further amended. Brown-Hudson Folklore Awards were presented to Lucy Morgan, director emeritus of the folkcraft school at Penland; Paul Green, playwright and folklorist of Chapel Hill; and George P. Wilson, Greensboro's expert on folk speech.

A great moment was the unanimous election of Arthur Palmer Hudson as the first Honorary Life Member in the history of the Society.

Two new Life Members of the Society are Marvin Burke Koonce, Jr., Post Office Box 6511, Raleigh 27608, and Calvin Battle Koonce, 3040 Randolph Drive, Raleigh 27609.

TWELVE TALL TALES FROM WILKES COUNTY

($100 Prize Entry)

by Jerry D. Joines

John E. Joines, the source of these tales, is my father and a resident of Wilkes County, North Carolina. He was born 1914 in the Brushy Mountains community of Brocktown near Moravian Falls, a part of the county not until recent years approached by modernization. Brocktown is about ten miles south of Wilkesboro in the vicinity of Pore's Knob, highest mountain in the area and site of a look-out tower.

Many of the older people of the area grew up in genuine Appalachian mountain tradition. My father was and is a part of this tradition and retains a great many songs and stories that have come to his attention in the past. He enjoys talking and singing, and his stories and songs are so familiar to him that they are almost commonplace. He has heard most of them for as long as he can remember, and he has made no special effort either to learn or remember material.

In his early years, he worked at a number of jobs, including farming, sawmilling, orchard work, and horse-breaking. It is significant that his favorite pastime is, and has always been, hunting. His experience with dogs and game enables him to tell detailed stories which capture the listener's belief until the lie is revealed at the end.

The twelve tales which follow are given in precisely the order in which he related them to me in March and April, 1971.

ONE. Did I ever tell you about that old bird dog I used to own? I guess he's about the best old dog that anybody ever hunted after. I know one time I had 'im out goin' out through the field with 'im, and I had an old single-barrelled gun and he went into a briar patch and he pointed a covey of birds. I told him to flush 'em, and out come one bird and I killed it, and loaded my gun back, and when I got it loaded out

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** *Born in Wilkes County, February 13, 1952, the author attended public schools there. He is now a junior at the University in Chapel Hill, majoring in zoology. He has studied folklore under both Daniel W. Patterson and Charles G. Zug III.*

come another bird. I shot it and loaded my gun back and out come another bird. And after I'd killed about five or six birds I got to wonderin' how he's a-lettin' one bird fly at a time, how he's a-flushin' one instead of the whole covey. So I got to lookin', and he'd pointed 'em in a stump hole and ever' time I'd load my gun he'd pull his foot off and let a bird fly out, and then he'd slap his foot back over the hole till I loaded my gun back.

TWO. I's a-huntin' one day and a bunch of kids were playin' down on the bank and he [my old dog] run down to where they was a-playin' and come to a full point, and I thinks, "Why, you're crazy, they ain't no birds there, and them kids playin' there on the bank." I got to lookin', and one of the little old boys had on a shirt made out of a Bob-White flour sack, and he had the bob-white on his shirt pointed.

THREE. And when I's out one time it come a big rain and the creek was up pretty deep, and goin' up the creek bank and he [the bird dog] run up to the end of a log and pointed at the log. I kept searchin' around, and I couldn't find no birds and finally I looked down in the log and there was a nine-pound catfish. I got the catfish out, but I kept wonderin' why the dog pointed the catfish. He'd never tried to point no fish before, nor nothin' like that, and I got the catfish home and started to clean it that night and it had seven potteridges in it. The potteridges had evidently run in the log to get out of the rain and the creek got up and the catfish swum up in the log and eat the potteridges, and the old dog pointed the potteridges, and I thought he's a-pointin' the catfish.

FOUR. I finally lost 'im though. I took him out a-huntin' one day and he got gone, and I hunted and hunted and hunted and I never did find my dog. I knew he was a good dog. He wouldn't break a point if he ever pointed a covey of birds. He'd just stand and hold 'em until I came and told 'im to flush 'em. And the next year I went back and I found his bones where he's standin' at full point and he had nine piles of potteridge bones in front of him. He'd pointed a covey of birds and stood there and held them till they all starved to death, and he starved to death, too.

FIVE. Did I ever tell you about the coon dog I had a few year ago? I believe he was the best that I've ever been in the woods with, and I've owned several good coon dogs. I know I went one night, settin' up on a ridge and there was a big chestnut tree over there on the side of the ridge there, right below me. And that old dog, when he run a coon that went inside of a den in a holler tree, he'd bark different

than he did when it was on the outside of the tree, so I'd just call 'im, and he'd leave. Well, I set up on that ridge that night, and he just kept strikin' a coon, and he'd run it, and it'd make a big circle around over the mountain, and come back and go in that one old holler chestnut. I don't know how many coons he did run in there that night, and the next mornin' about daylight he treed in that old holler chestnut, and I went over there and he had so many coons in that tree that, ever' time the coons would draw their breath in, the crack in the chestnut would spread four inches and when they'd let it out, it'd go back together. I don't know how many they was; I didn't keep count of 'em, but they was several coons in that tree.

SIX. I know one night one of my friends had come up to go with me a-huntin', and we went over and set down on a stump. That old dog he just kept runnin' around all over the country, and he'd run back into the road about a mile below us, and then he'd go off and strike again, and then he'd run back into the road. My friend said, "I thought you had a coon dog," said, "I never saw a dog that'd run races and then quit; I thought they's supposed to tree when they run 'em up a tree." I said, "That dog ain't run none up a tree yet." I said, "You wait until daylight, and I'll show you what he's doin'." Well, he kept doin' that all night. Next mornin' we saw him comin' up the road and he had about fifty coons in front of him a-herdin' 'em along up the road. I says, "I told you I had the best dern coon dog in the South."

SEVEN. My Grandpa, when he got up about eighty-five years old, he had 'im a big mill rock, oh, it was about six foot across and about eight inches through. He'd always, ever' Christmas, he'd get him a gallon of apple brandy and he'd go out and pick that mill rock up and stick it up over his head. He'd done that ever' Christmas ever since he got married, so one Christmas he's about eighty-seven he got him a gallon of brandy, and he'd always wait till after dinner before he'd go out and stick the mill rock up. He got him a gallon of brandy, and he took 'im two or three drinks, and he eat dinner, and took 'im another drink or two, and he decided to go out and put the mill rock up over his head. And it'd been awful cold there for about six weeks, just real freezin' weather and the ground hadn't thawed nor nothin', and he went out there and he got down and he got a-hold of that mill rock and he couldn't even shake it. So he goes back in and drinks a little more brandy, and goes out and tries it again, and he couldn't move it again. He goes back and he sets down, and he looked awful bad. Granny said to him, "Grandpa," said, "What's the matter with you?" said, "What are you so down and out about?" He said, "I'm a-gettin' old and old fast, woman," said, "Last year that rock wadn't even heavy, and this year I can't

even move it." He sat and studied a while and took in two or three more drinks of brandy, and went out and he got down on his knees and he got a-hold of that rock, and he grunted and groaned a time or two and give a heave and stuck it up over his head and he had nine acres of topsoil froze to it.

EIGHT. He built him an old gun, a great big gun, barrel I guess it was about fifteen or twenty feet long, and big around as a washin' tub almost; but he'd made it out of old pipe and stuff so he made it sort of like an old muzzle loader, you know. He put him a fuse in the back and then he'd pack in a great big load of powder. He'd usually put a keg of powder at one time, sometimes two kegs. And that summer ever' time he'd have a piece of scrap iron, any kind of an old broke clevis or end or clip off a swingletree, or a grab or a piece of axe or a piece of broken glass or anything, he'd just drop it down in that gun barrel, and he'd do that till it come about three or four big frosts in the fall of the year. Then he'd pack him some waddin' on top of that junk and he'd shoot that gun. Then he'd send all of his children and grandchildren up on the mountain to get the game. It'd usually get enough to last till next year. He'd freeze and can meat and have enough to last 'im till the next year.

NINE. Did I ever tell you about the cold winter we had when I was a boy? I know one winter, sound was even froze. It was so cold everything just froze; you didn't hear a sound all winter. I know I had a pack of dogs and I got out there one day a-rabbit-huntin'. They jumped a rabbit and run away round the mountain and backwards and forewards for about an hour; and I noticed I couldn't hear 'em bark but I didn't think much about it, I'd got so used to not hearing no racket. Rabbit run by me and I killed it, and thought no more about it till the next spring. And it turned warm up in the spring after the game law had closed, and there wadn't no open season on rabbit, and the game warden happened to be a-passin' through and heard them dogs runnin' that rabbit around the mountain and the gun go off and shot it. And he come and arrested me for huntin' out of season.

TEN. I had a cat one time and I had two young dogs, and they was always chasin' that cat. And I had a stackpole down in the field where I'd had some hay stacked and got all the hay hauled off and left the pole standin' up. It was about three or four hundred yards from the house. These pups would get after that old cat and run 'im around the house a time or two and then he'd take off down in the field and climb that stackpole, They done that till the pups got up about grown, and they was pretty good-sized dogs, and gettin' so they was pushin' that

old cat pretty fast to outrun 'em. So he's afraid they'd catch 'im and kill 'im, they's makin' 'im get up in high gear to get to that stackpole before they caught him. So I slipped down there in the field one day and I pulled that stackpole out, and laid it down. So the dogs got after the cat, and around the house he went about twice, and he made a dive for that stackpole, and you know that cat run forty foot in the air before he even noticed that pole wadn't there.

ELEVEN. I had two old cats one time and they got into a fight in the backyard. They fit and fit and fit, and all at once they just started climbin' one another. Them fool cats climb one another, one would run up to the top of one, and then the other would run up him, and they done that till they went clean out of sight and fur fell for three weeks. I never saw such a cat fight in all my life.

TWELVE. I know when I was a kid we had an old cat and wanted to get rid of 'im. My daddy he hauled him off to town. It was ten miles to town. We was ridin' in a wagon. We took 'im down to town and turned him loose. We carried him across the Yadkin River and over to the North Wilkesboro side and turned him loose. Well, when we got back home, the blame cat was settin' at home on the porch. And Dad said, "I will fix him," so he got him a sack and put him in it the next time he went to town, and he got him some big rocks, and he put the rocks in the sack, and tied the old cat up in the sack, and throwed him in the river. And when we got home, he's a-settin' on the porch, as wet as he could be, and I don't know how he got out of that sack. Dad told me, he said, "Well, you've got to see if you can't get rid of that cat." And I said, "Why, I can get rid of him easy." So I took the old cat way down in the woods. There's a big stump down there, and I took my axe with me. I just laid him down on that stump and chopped his head off. Went on back to the house, and in about an hour we's settin' there on the porch talkin', and I looked out the road and there come that cat, come out of the woods and was trottin' out the road with his head in his mouth.

The first four of these tales concern the feats of an intelligent bird dog. The intelligent dog story is a common one, and specific variants were found for three of the four tales. For the first, concerning the dog who traps a covey of birds with his foot and releases them one at a time, one Alabama and two Texas versions were located. One of the Texas stories explains the dog's ability by the fact that he hunts "blue quail," birds which would rather take refuge in a prairie dog hole than fly away.[1]

No specific variant of the second story, in which the dog points

the bird on a Bob-White Flour sack, was found. The story is similar to Baughman number X1215.8 (ag), wherein the dog points a sign reading "A. Partridge, Attorney."

The tale of the dog pointing a fish that has swallowed a bird appeared in a Northern newspaper, *The Yankee Blade*, in 1852.[2] In a version from Indiana, the hunter kills a bird, the bird falls in a pond and is swallowed by a fish, and the dog points the fish.[3]

One variant of number four was found, in which the dog points a bird and holds the point until he starves. The story was collected from an Indiana barber who told it for the truth. The man had a rotten piece of the dog's collar which he used to verify his tale.[4]

By far the most common of these stories, insofar as available sources would indicate, is the tale of the breathing tree. Versions of this tale have been found in Indiana, Maine, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Arkansas. The Maine version appears in Dorson's *Jonathan Draws The Long Bow* under the title "Major Brown's Coon Story."[5] The hunter in this version sits on a log and is pinched by the closing crack. He investigates and finds the log full of coons, breathing in unison. One Indiana version tells of a peach tree packed with sleeping mice.[6] A Kentucky version (told, incidentally, by John Jacob Niles) has bees instead of coons inside the hollow tree.[7] The Arkansas version has the tree swell to several times its normal size, with steam from the coons' breath coming from a hole in the side.[8] Vance Randolph, who collected this story, told of other versions:

> This "pooched-out tree" story is known all over the Ozark country, and has been several times in print. I told it myself in *The Camp on Wildcat Creek*. Hal Norwood included it in *Just a Book*, remarking that the whole tree would "contract and expand like a horse breathing." Norwood credits his version to George Nall, a blacksmith of Lockesburg, Arkansas, and says the truth of the story was vouched for by A. D. Hawkins, a lawyer who lived in Little River County, Arkansas.[9]

The story seems to be favored by collectors and quite possibly by the tellers themselves.

No reference to the sixth tale was located. The story of the dog herding a large number of coons would come under the general area of intelligent dogs, and it is likely that other versions of this tale exist.

The two tales of Grandpa were also without exact counterparts. Tales of great strength are common, and this story would come under the general area of Baughman number X941, the "remarkable lifter." This story is so concise that the writer would imagine that other versions do exist. The story of the gun would perhaps belong to Baughman

number X1121.2*."great gun scatters shot in wide pattern."

The story of the frozen rabbit race is excellent, for the frozen sound idea is topped by the arrest for hunting out of season. A similar story concerning a fox race comes from the southwestern part of Virginia. The fox hunters hear a chase one night, and recognize the voice of a dead dog, and also the voices of the dogs lying at their feet. The story ends when they realize that it is merely a thawed-out race that actually took place in the colder part of the winter.[10]

The tale of a cat running up a stackpole may be original, for no other versions were found. Again, the availability of material and the limited nature of collecting enterprises could be responsible for the fact that this tale is not commonly published. On the other hand, the tale of the two cats climbing each other dates back a number of years. Two versions were found, one from Kentucky and one from Arkansas.[11] In both tales, the animals involved were wildcats, and not just ordinary housecats. The Arkansas tale was collected in the 1890s. Both tales closely resemble my father's version, even to the detail of fur falling for days.

Two versions of the last tale, concerning the cat that could not be killed, were found. One tale from Oneida County, New York, is exactly like the version here.[12] Three identical attempts are made at killing the cat, and finally the cat returns with his severed head in his mouth. The version from Alma, Kansas, has the cat drowned, shot, and finally decapitated for killing chickens.[13] It is of interest that the final tale involves an impossible situation. It is the only tale among the twelve that involves the idea of a humorous and blatant contradiction. The story is classified by Baughman under X1211, "lies about cats," and it is also representative of X1720, "absurd disregard of anatomy."

My father's stories are excellent examples of tall tales. They are concise, usually consisting of one motif each; they are exaggerations of reality, told as if they were true; and there is ample evidence that the tales are widely known in the oral tradition. Finally, because of the skill of the narrator, they are well told and for fullest appreciation one should really hear my father tell them.

Baughman classifications for the tales:

ONE.	X1215.8 (ac)
TWO.	X1215.8 (ag) (similar)
THREE.	X1215.8 (ad)
FOUR.	X1215.9 (ab)
FIVE.	X116 (a)
SIX.	X1215.8 (a) (general group)
SEVEN.	X941 (general group)

EIGHT.	X1121.2* (similar)
NINE.	X1623.7* (similar)
TEN.	X1211 (general group)
ELEVEN.	X1212 (a)
TWELVE.	X1211 (ca)

1. Alabama version: *Southern Folklore Quarterly*, 1944. p. 107, "Tales of a Mississippi Soldier."

Texas versions: Robert B. Downs, *The Bear Went over the Mountain*, p. 151. "The Blue Quail Dog," reprinted from Charles F. Arrowood, *Backwoods to Border*. Also *Southern Folklore Quarterly*, 1945, p. 188, "East Texas Hunting Windies."

2. *New York Folklore Quarterly*, 3 (1947), 20, "Yorker Yarns of Yore."

3. *Hoosier Folklore Bulletin*, 3(December, 1944), 61.

4. *Hoosier Folklore Bulletin*, 4 (March, 1945), 18.

5. Richard Dorson, *Jonathan Draws the Long Bow* (Harvard University Press, 1946), p. 227.

6. *Hoosier Folklore Bulletin*, 1 (June, 1942), 14.

7. *Hoosier Folklore Bulletin*, 1 (1942), p. 66.

8. Vance Randolph, *We Always Lie to Strangers* (Columbia University Press, 1951), p. 96.

9. Randolph, p. 96.

10. Herbert M. Sutherland, *Tall Tales of Devil's Apron* (Radford, Virginia, Commonwealth Press, 1970), p. 57.

11. Kentucky version: Percy Mackaye, *Tall Tales of the Kentucky Mountains* (Century Company, 1926), p. 55.

Arkansas version: James R. Masterson, *Tall Tales of Arkansas* (Boston, 1942), p. 90.

12. Harold W. Thompson, *Body, Boots, and Britches* (Philadelphia, 1940), p. 150.

13. Samuel J. Sackett, *Kansas Folklore* (University of Nebraska Press, 1961), p. 14.

UNPUBLISHED FOLKLORE IN THE BROWN COLLECTION

by Charles Bond

The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore is the largest, most homogeneous collection of its kind in the United States, with more than 38,000 items, ninety-five percent of them collected in North Carolina. The collection was assembled during the first half of this century primarily by Dr. Brown, for many years Secretary-Treasurer of the North Carolina Folklore Society, as well as member and Chairman of the Duke University Department of English.[1] Upon his death in 1943, Dr. Newman I. White, his colleague at Duke, assumed the great task of preparing the collection for print. Dr. White's initial organizational efforts and the subsequent editorial assistance of many other specialized scholars eventually led to the publication of the seven-volume *Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore*, issued by the Duke University Press (1952-1964).

Since publication, the volumes of the *Brown Collection* have served as an important source of reference for students of folklore. The scope of genres in the *Collection* and its great number of entries within those genres—in short, the collection's size—make it valuable. Dr. Brown's approach to folklore was to "collect everything of *possible* value,"[2] so, *in toto*, the Brown Collection transcends the collections of "curious survivals" common to the era and approaches in many respects a raw ethnography, full of the details of the cultural anthropology of North Carolina. Dr. White best summarized the nature and importance of the Frank C. Brown Collection:

** *A Kentuckian now studying law in San Francisco, the author received an A.B. from Duke University in 1971. Concerning the project described in this article, he wrote: "I am indebted to many people for their cooperation and assistance. Members of the Duke University Library staff were exceedingly helpful, particularly Dr. Benjamin Powell, University Librarian, and Dr. Mattie Russell, Curator of Manuscripts. Also, Dean James L. Price secured a grant for this and a related project, for which I am deeply grateful. My sincerest thanks to all these people."*

> As to how the collection was assembled, the answer is in every way I know—sound recordings, noting down from dictation, extensive materials in manuscript at first and second hand from students, large manuscript collections from other collectors, clippings from newspapers, traditional family documents, etc., etc., . . . So large a collection amassed so persistently over nearly a third of a century almost entirely from one limited, homogeneous region, may properly be expected to yield a full and sound picture of the whole folk background of that region—and so also of similar ones. . . .[3]

It is now nearly three decades since Dr. Brown died, and nearly two decades since the first three volumes of the *Brown Collection* were published. A new generation of folklorists is rising with new interests and emphases. With our perspective changed not only by these new approaches, but by the passage of time itself, a re-examination of the entire Brown Collection seemed in order.

But what kind of re-examination? In April of 1970, I undertook an initial investigation and discovered that the entire collection was in temporary storage, and that the only indexes available were the original incomplete catalogues prepared for the editors in 1945. With ample space in Duke's new Perkins Library, the collection was soon moved to its present location in the Manuscript Department. Turning to Professor Paull Baum's "Foreword" to the published Collection, I found the following passage:

> It should be stated clearly that though much is given, much remains, and that the editors have omitted a great deal. In fact, a tabulation of their rejections was once planned, but has been suppressed, for the complete Collection with multiple indexes is now accessible in the Duke University Library.[4]

Realizing that the catalogue of the collection had to be made complete, and aware at the same time that all unpublished items should be reviewed, I adopted Dr. Baum's abandoned plan for a tabulation as a means of achieving both of those goals. It took some twenty weeks of work to complete my inclusive Tabulation of Unpublished Items in the Brown Collection (over 300 typewritten pages and 2,000 file cards of verbatim texts), as well as more than thirty hours of Dr. Brown's later, higher quality field recordings. My Tabulation was geared primarily for general use in the Manuscript Department.

Only one assistant editor, I discovered, had published all of the contributions for his genre: Professor Archer Taylor included every riddle in the collection.[5] On the other extreme, the tabulation for some

genres yielded hundreds of unpublished items. For example, an item-by-item check of the 6,000 proverbs in the collection uncovered more than 900 that were not printed; likewise, more than 1,000 other items related to folk speech were omitted. Surprisingly, there were two completely "untouched" genres: Folk "Sermons" (24 items, mostly humorous), and The Origin of Place Names (currently being edited by Mr. Edward S. Haynes of Duke University). In other areas, there were 58 unpublished games, 129 unpublished rhymes, 80 unpublished customs, and 49 unpublished tales and legends. Dr. Wayland Hand, of the University of California at Los Angeles, informs me that he is reviewing the Collection's unpublished beliefs for possible publication, and will ultimately return these to the Duke Library. That leaves only the songs and ballads, and it is hoped that in the near future I can place into print Dr. Hudson's and Dr. Belden's complete, collated checklist of the 447 unpublished songs and ballads. Suffice it to say that most of these songs are vintage Tin Pan Alley—sentimental, homiletic, and the like.

In closing, let me again invite folklorists to peruse the Tabulation, listen to the tapes, and survey the entire Frank C. Brown Collection in the Duke Library. In so doing, they will discover, as I have, that the rhymes and games, the gruesomely worded superstitions, the sentimental songs of home and mother, can indeed help us paint more clearly and honestly the portrait of North Carolina's past.

I have appended examples of the rich unpublished materials in the Collection.

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[1]Dr. White presents a thorough history of the Collection and its collector in his "General Introduction" to *The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore* (henceforth referred to as *Brown*), I, 12-28.

[2]*Brown*, I, 20.

[3]Newman I. White, "The Frank C. Brown Collection of Folklore: Its Organization, Classification, and Publication," p. 4. This paper was delivered before the General Literature Group of the Modern Language Association, New York, December 28, 1944, and a manuscript of the text is among "The Editors' Papers" in the collection. Those "Editors' Papers," by the way, document the great labors of scholarship that went into the preparation of the seven volumes. It was indeed a twenty-year odyssey for the collection, from Dr. Brown's attic to press. In reading the "Editors' Papers," one gains a great appreciation of the efforts of Dr. White and all the other scholars involved.

[4]*Brown*, I, xi.

[5]This author is responsible for supplements to the first three volumes. All music in the collection was apparently printed in Volumes IV and V, although a number of tune variants heard on Brown's sound recordings were not transcribed.

GAME. The Tale of the Wild Cat

Originally contributed to the Frank C. Brown Collection by the Misses Jean and Hallie Holeman of West Durham, circa 1922. In 1971, I collected the same drawing game from a Duke student who lives near Kinston. She had learned it from her grandmother, also a native of Eastern North Carolina.

Tom said he believed he would build him a house, and this is how he did it.

Jack said he believed he would build him one just like it.

Tom said he would put a chimney on his house.

Jack said he would put a chimney on his.

Tom said he would put a window in his house.

Jack said he would put one in his house.

Tom said he would put some walks in his yard.

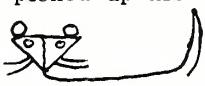
Jack said he would put some in his yard.

Some distance from the house was a spring.

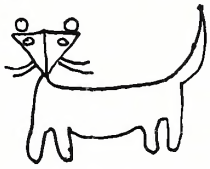
Tom said he would run down to the spring to get a bucket of water.

When there, he thought he would run up the hill a short distance to look about a little.

He came back, picked up his bucket and started on his way home.



He went a short distance and fell down. Up he got, but in a short time, he fell down again. He got up, went on quite a distance and fell down again. He got up and in a little while fell again. When he got up this time, he reached home safely.



GAME. Miss Lucy, or Twistification

In his introduction to the Games, Professor Paul G. Brewster expresses his regret that more black children's material was not collected (*Brown* I, p. 33). Ironically, the Tabulation revealed that more black children's games were excluded than were published. "Miss Lucy, or Twistification" is one of several from the Maude Minnish Sutton collection of children's lore. The music for this and six other Sutton games appears in the *Collection,* V, 545-551.

"Miss Lucy" is a song that is used to play a sort of dance game called Twistification. We picked it up from a group of Negro children playing ring games one summer evening. The game was intricate, and we judged that a good deal was improvised.

I went down to see Miss Lucy
Oh I'd never been there before
Last time I saw Miss Lucy
She was rollin' on the floor.

Roll on the floor
Roll on the floor
Roll on the floor
Till life's roll is o'er.

As I was a-goin' down the road
I met a rabbit and I met a toad

And ever time that toad would sing
The rabbit cut the pigeon wing.

Roll on the floor, etc.

This dance was more of a romp than a game played by formula. One little black urchin would turn handsprings through the ring at the "Roll on the floor" line. Another would Cut the Pigeon Wing at intervals. They varied the above song with:

Sugar in my coffee
The rabbit hipped
The rabbit hopped
The rabbit bit off
The turnip top.

A little more sugar in my coffee, O
I do love sugar in my coffee, O.

I do love liquor
And I will take a dram
I'd ruther be a nigger
Than a pore white man.

A little more sugar in my coffee, O
I do love sugar in my coffee, O.

An old mammy sitting near by where the games were being played told us that "the Chillum were juest a rabbit dancin'."

RHYME. I Know Eno

Miss Eleanor Simpson of East Durham contributed this ingenious tongue-twisting wit-mixer in 1923. Today I would certainly be remiss if I did not dedicate it to Dr. Holger O. Nygard, Duke's well-known ballad scholar, whose laudable efforts have done much toward preserving the natural beauty of the Eno River.

I know Eno, you know too,
In fact we all three know.
We know Eno, he knows you.
You know, I know Eno.

North Carolina State Library
Raleigh

RHYME. Trot A Horse

The following two variants of this bouncing rhyme present contrasting viewpoints, showing, I believe, that so many of our problems may have their roots in simple things.

A. From Mrs. Nilla Lancaster of Wayne Co.

Trot a horse, trot a horse, my little man,
Better mind out you don't fall down.

B. From Valeria Johnson Howard of Roseboro, Sampson Co.

Trot a little horse and go to town
Take a load of buckshot to shoot a nigger down.

BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS

You must pinch a baby's nose for nine mornings after birth to make the nose pretty. Sometimes a clothes pin is used. Rub a baby's head while it is little to make it a nice shape. (Paul Green, Chapel Hill, from Eastern N. C., 1926-'28)

Painters (Panthers) can smell childbirth blood for miles. (Anon.)

A cat should not be permitted in a room with a corpse. (Louise Lucas of White Oak, Bladen Co.)

Put a saucer of salt on a corpse to keep it from swelling. (Anon.)

Hair Color Restorative: sage tea. (Kate S. Russell of Roxboro, Person Co.)

Homemade Coffee: roasted bran and molasses (John F. Doering of N.Y.), or parched wheat (Kathleen Mock of Davidson Co.).

Horse Fiddle: Instrument used in belling a newly married couple, composed of a large box made of thick boards with one end left open. A well-rosined plank is used like the bow of a violin, and two men push it back and forth over the open sides of the box. Two sides of the box take the place of the strings of the violin, and the whole box acts as a sounding board. (From a longer description of wedding customs by Fred Ketcham.)

PROVERBS AND SAWS

HAND: Keep your hand upon the throttle and your eye upon the rail. (Paul Green, Chapel Hill; originally from hymn "Life's Mountain Railway to Heaven.")

JOY: Joy go with you and peace behind you, / But never quite catch up with you. (Gertrude Allen Vaught of Alexander Co.) Joy go with you, you'll leave peace behind you. (Anon.)

NINETY-NINE: Ninety-nine pounds is an old hag's weight. (Anon.)

SAID: Least said, soonest mended. Little said is soon mended. Least said the better. (All Anon.)

SCRATCH: He scratched his cakes and poured syrup down his back. (Paul Green)

SUN: The sun should never set on anger. (Paul Green)

WOOD: Don't put no 'pendance in dead wood. (Paul Green)

LEGEND. What Caused the Brown Mountain Lights

Narrated by Mrs. Ira Vance of Pineola, c. 1941,as told by Granny Clark.

(The following unpublished legend is, in my opinion, the gem of the collection. In this murder mystery with its supernatural resolution, the action centers on North Carolina's most famous phenomenon, the Brown Mountain Lights. As if these elements were not titillating enough for the folklorist, the story is told in the first person, *and*, according to a note by Brown, within earshot of the villain's sister.

(Such a curiosity-rousing narrative naturally brought out the detective in me: What is fact, and what is fancy in this tale? Who are the characters, and where are the landmarks? So I wrote Mrs. Vance, the narrator, and learned sadly that ill health has rendered her unable to recall any of the facts. At the same time, editor Stith Thompson cannot recall why the tale was not published. Obviously, though, Professor White had expected the inclusion of some Brown Mountain material, as evinced by his authoritative notes on the Lights, *Brown* I, 629-630.

(So I present the mystery of "What Caused the Brown Mountain Lights," and, trusting that time has not completely concealed the answers, I call on my fellow sleuths and folklorists to investigate and report until all of the facts are known and the case is closed.–C.B.)

Well, I'll tell you now what caused the Brown Mountain Lights. There's lots of folks thinks they are caused by minerals–different kinds of minerals or something like that, but I know that it wasn't caused by that. I know why it is caused, because there wasn't any lights there before this tragedy happened.

Now Jim was a mean and cruel man and he had the most lovely little wife you ever saw. She was just as good and *clever* as she could be. Her name was Belinda, and Belinda was expecting to have a baby and Jim was just as mean to her as he could be, and he was kind of sparking another old woman that was around there in the country. Her name was Susie. He was crazy about her, and so one day Belinda was not feeling so good, and folks missed her out of the community, and

some folks went over to her house one day and asked Jim where Belinda was, and he says, "Oh, Linda, she just put on her old bonnet and left the other day and she hasn't come back yet."

Folks got to looking around and found blood on the door steps and blood on the gate and down the road where there was wagon tracks. And so folks got to hunting for Belinda, and, way about ten or twelve miles away from where they lived, they found Belinda's bonnet. And immediately after they found the bonnet, they got to searching all through the woods for Belinda, and all of a sudden fire got out and swept the whole country out. And so of course if there was any more clues as to Belinda's whereabouts, it was destroyed when the fire passed through; and immediately after that the Brown Mountain Lights came.

And so I watched and I watched the Brown Mountain Lights and I decided there was something quare about it, and I was going to find out what it was. So one night I kept seeing the lights go up and come down and go out, and there would be two or three lights that would come up and go down, up and down and out, and up and down, so I decided I would get the position of those lights located on Brown Mountain and in the daytime I would go and search it out and see what caused it.

So I went over there with a couple of my friends and we came to the face of a big cliff, and I climbed around and got on top of the cliff and looked down at the bottom, and I saw a pile of stones laying down there at the foot of that cliff. And I says, says I to myself, "The Lord didn't put them stones there. That's been put there by the hand of man."

I climbed down off the cliff and went down there and unpiled those stones and what do you suppose I found? I found the skull of a grown person and the skull of a baby. You know folks say the skulls of murdered people never decay, and I have heard all my life that if you ever took the skull of a murdered person and got it over the head of the person who murdered the one who was murdered, and asked them about it they couldn't tell a lie; they would have to tell the truth.

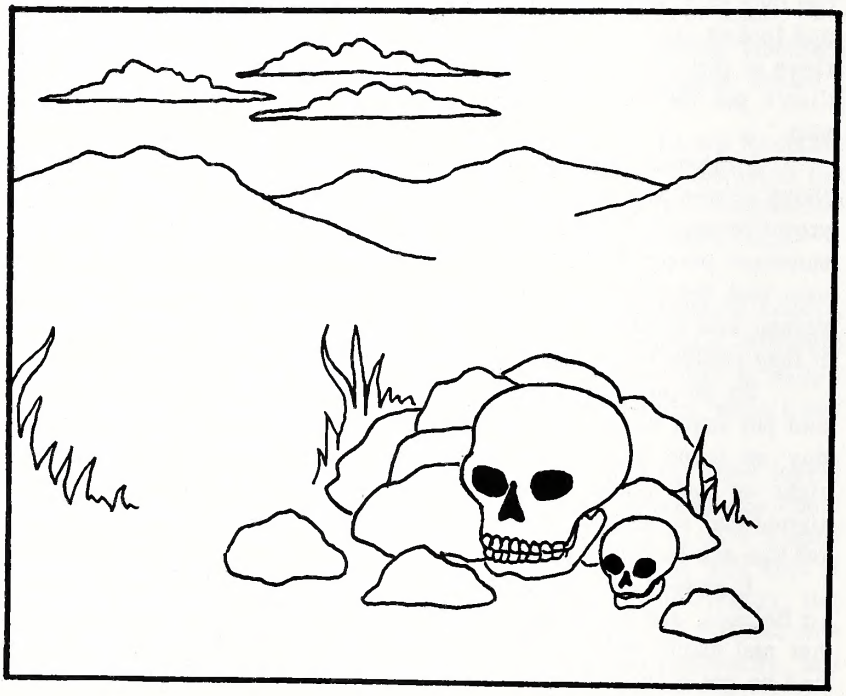
So we picked up those skulls and took them back to Jim's house and put them in the loft and we kept watching and watching until one day we found him sitting right under those skulls and I just popped right up and asked, "Did you kill Belinda?" And he raised up and turned just as white as a sheet and trembled, and the sweat just poured off him and he didn't say a word.

It passed off that he was just about as mean to Susie as he was to Belinda, and Susie was afraid to say anything, afraid he would beat her and maybe kill her. So it passed off till his health began to fail and he got sick, and oh he had the awfulest time in the world. He was

all the time a-screaming and hollering and had a stick in his hand beating it in the air and saying, "Oh Belinda, get away, get away, get away, take that crying baby away!" And he just screamed and screamed and did that way for weeks and weeks.

The folks at that time let their cattle all run in the range, and they had their calves penned up so the cows would come so they could get the milk, and hogs and everything run out in the woods then; and the evening that Jim was about to die he was worse than usual. He had been screaming all day and fighting Belinda away from him all day long, and it looked like he was completely exhausted. He had gotten to where he couldn't raise his voice and he had just about passed fighting with his stick, and all of a sudden all the chickens began to cackle and the roosters began to crow, and the ducks began to quack, and the geese began to holler, pigs began to squeal, cows began to bawl, and horses began to neigh, and the gate flew open and we looked out and saw a black cart backed right up to the door. It started pulling out and when he started to leave the door, there was a big black ball laying in the black cart, and Jim was dead.

(Note by Brown: After Mrs. Vance finished dictating, she said: "I should have been more careful about relating this story because Granny –Jim's sister–may still be out in the kitchen." The daughter went to look and reported that Granny was still there.)



CONJURE DOCTORS IN EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA

by Patricia S. McLean

The conjure doctor in eastern North Carolina evolved from a tradition of African voodoo, native Indian practices, and Anglo-American folk healing. When the Negro was first bonded into slavery, he brought with him elements of the African culture concerned with voodooism and conjuration. The people who professed alliance with the supernatural were received with respect and fear. Practitioners of the knowledge gained fame in the United States. From New Orleans and the slave market to the plantations throughout the South, hoodoo doctors passed down their secrets of the mysterious knowledge. Other abilities also developed: The fortune teller could look into the future through his communications with the gods, locate lost persons, and forecast a believer's destiny. The healer, or conjure doctor, could also cure natural ailments through the use of herbs and his secret arts.

Those "divinely selected" as receivers of this knowledge are separated from the ordinary populace. The doctor himself believes firmly in his power and is very willing to guarantee his prescriptions and charms. Therefore, the mixture of common sense and "mystic knowledge" of the conjurer induces psychological reactions from the patients which are favorable to recovery.

The perpetuation of the conjure doctor in the South centralized in areas of low economic and educational standards. Medically trained doctors are not attracted to these regions and the sick are suspicious of modern science. Therefore, the sick maintain faith in the conjurer. The loyalty which the patients attach to their doctors and the recoveries that apparently result from the practical prescriptions demonstrate the power of the will over the body in the medical field.

** *Born in Lenoir, the author grew up in Murfreesboro, went to Salem College for two years, then transferred to the University at Chapel Hill, where she graduated in 1971 with a major in history. She studied folklore with Charles G. Zug III and is considering it for graduate study.*

The conjure doctor does not deny the validity of home remedies such as ice packs for fever or sassafras tea for colds. However, he has special formulas—concoctions made of herbs, spider webs, animal intestines, and various other articles—which he can combine with his metaphysical knowledge to form brews, ointments, and powders. The spiritual aspect of this specialized field is apparent. The conjure doctor is deeply religious and claims to be a messenger of God. He insists that his faith and prayers have resulted in God's choice of him as a healer. He will treat only patients who have complete faith in his power: If a remedy fails, it is that the patient did not truly believe in the healer's power.

The faith that a community can have in a conjure doctor is exemplified by the fame of Jim Jordan, who lived in Maney's Neck Township, Hertford County, North Carolina. Jordan had little formal education and was employed by a lumber company to saw wood. He decided, however, that God wanted him to work for mankind. Thus he quit his job, gathered his knowledge of conjure, and began to practice. The Negro population soon developed a great respect and fear for him; the community was dominated by his word. New Jersey, New York, and Maryland citizens often visited him. A bus stop was even established on the Norfolk-Murfreesboro route in order to accommodate those who sought his medical advice. For details, see *The Fabled Doctor Jim Jordan* (1963) by F. Roy Johnson.

A conversation with Jordan's son Buddy, who lives beside the small store where Dr. Jordan used to receive his callers, reveals a great deal about this healer:

> I'm fifty-six years old, but really I don't understand it. I was about twelve-thirteen years old, and he stopped working the saw wood. He was born to the right way. He had strong powers, that's all I know. If you followed his instruction and did as he said, you get well. He helped people that Dr. F------ didn't know what to do with. What I've always had in mind, that if you believe in God, then you can help people. He could get it out of them, give them some medicine, and five or six days he would come around. He never went out and worked no more. He was working for the Lord and trying to do the right thing. He kept gaining and gaining and gaining and he never worked no more. He didn't ever find no more job. He was ninety-one when he died. He was just an unusual man. God never fools you, he never lets you down. If you believe that you can be healed, then you can be healed. I think all that stuff is just the spirit of God. If God hands something down to you for the protection of folks, then that's it. He was a man just like me. A human being.

When he was a young man, he used to drink. Was about seventeen or eighteen. He got cut and he came home to his mother and his mother said, "Law, my son's done gone. Gone. No, the Lord is able and I am able to do it." Then she went and got an old felt black hat off the rack and she scraped the moss off of it. She scraped it and scraped it and then packed it and kept packing it on his neck on the cut. And she cured him. And it was a miracle of this time.

Yeah, I know some of the things he used. Turpentine and such. You know that when your father does such things over and over and you looking and looking, you bound to know some stuff. He had a crystal ball. If you said you were hurt, then he would look in this crystal ball and tell you exactly why you hurt.

One day he got three glasses–three glasses. Made that medicine. Three glasses about this tall. I never forgot that. Told her to take those three glasses. She was supposed to take the first one and she was supposed to start a-throwing up. He told her in the beginning that if she wan't too far gone and it hadn't gone through her intestine and ate her up and if he had enough to heal from, then she would get well. He told her to have faith in the God. I knowed that she take the first one and about ten minutes later, she took the second. About ten or fifteen minutes, she start a-vomiting and she look like she was a-gonna choke, choke. I thought she was dying. And-uh-finally she wanted to eat and then the instructions was for her to drink the other one and she did. It was about twelve o'clock. He had confidence that he was right. And she got well. Why three glasses? I think that was the nautical (*sic*) power. He had some good flesh there–good flesh and he had something to build on.

You know, I ask myself if I was making a mistake never taking time to use some of that stuff myself, but you know, I just never take the time. I know some of the things he put in it and some I don't. That's why I don't mess with it. I know he had more knowledge than me, but that's all it was. He said that God had something for him to do and it wan't sawing wood or nothing like that. And it worked out until he died.

This conversation shows the great belief in God with which conjuration can be connected. The strong faith that the people had in Jordan is related to their concept of religion and "The Spirit." Magical characteristics are also apparent: The use of three glasses, the crystal ball, and Jordan's sudden decision to work with conjure all have a connotation of magic. The belief that a family contains special power is also shown. Buddy told of his grandmother's skills as well

as his father's skills, ending his story by citing his own natural gifts.

Another legendary conjure doctor in nearby Indian Woods, Bertie County, was Lorenza Smallwood (see F. Roy Johnson, *Witches and Demons*, 1969, p. 148), who lived one half a century ago. He is remembered because of his isolated home among the rattlesnake and herb area and his power in conjuration. One of his feats in controlling evil spirits was a battle with a witch, a Negro named Sally Ann, whom he finally killed. She and Lorenza claimed the same plot of land. In order to conquer Lorenza's spirit, Sally Ann began to come in the night while Lorenza was sleeping, change him into a horse, and ride him over the countryside. One night Lorenza stayed awake and underwent a great struggle with Sally Ann. She changed into a black cat, a snake, and a birdlike creature, attempting to escape. However, Lorenza was able to grab a part of the creature as she fled. A few days later, Sally Ann died, and the "thing" that Lorenza had maintained in the struggle disappeared. Thereafter, Lorenza's reputation as a conjure doctor was never doubted. He had triumphed over an evil spirit.

A conjure doctor who currently has a wide reputation is Lewis Lee Jones, who lives in a small house in the Nat Turner territory outside of Boykins, Virginia. His practice brings him many believers from North Carolina since he is only about ten miles from the state line. The following conversation that I had with Jones reveals a great deal about the life of a conjurer:

> I was born in 1896 and have been practicing all my life. Been doctoring since I was twelve years of age. Never played with my sisters. Never went around playing, always stayed by myself. I've always been apt in books. Would tell folks what I thought their trouble was. So I did and it worked out all right each and every time. Did hospital work in World War I and it gave me a heap of insight in medical work. They gave me my license—the federal government did.
>
> My family was from New Orleans. My grandmother, Frances Willingham, practiced. She was a full-blooded charcoal West Indian and so was my mother. So just about practically all the knowledge comes from Indian. I knowed everything about voodoo, too. Another thing is *Charlie Day's Help:* Can teach you each and every little thing about how a human being's supposed to be and how your mind works. Don't need no crystal ball because I've got this knowledge. I've been here forty years. They call me a conjure doctor or medical doctor because I knows just as much about doctoring, witchcraft, and conjuration.

I'm the onliest one in my family now that has power. That's the way it originated to me. I have seven sisters—the seventh sister is the wisest. She could work under me and even be better. A man from Panama told me that when I was working down there. I came back and put her in college. She finished in two and a half years and is teaching in Shaw University.

Sometimes you can't catch up with me in an airplane. People waiting on me all the time. Sometimes I'm gone three weeks, but I'm making money. I've got a hundred places to live now. Ain't ever been in with the law and I have clubbed. I had the flu, but I'm 'bout to overcome it. Didn't go to no other doctor. Make my own medicine and then take it.

How do I actually practice? I take you in a room, set on the light. I don't know what's wrong with you and I don't want you to tell me. I can tell you whether it's your boyfriend, a friend of yours, a girlfriend, or what's on your mind.

I have just as many women as men to come to me. Sometimes people in love can't get everything together. Sometimes they are married and have a boyfriend and want to see him. Men come about jobs. Helping hold jobs, getting a raise on their weekly salary, transferring to another job. Some come for bootlegging, for transferring the whiskey on the highway. Others want me to keep the law away from the house. My hardest case was a man from Boykins. The federal government caught him with a money case in his house. He wasn't paying taxes so they arrested him. Took me three years and a half for him to come free. I had to affect the people's feelings. Then got to keep the man on a straight row. Got to be direct right. All he does now is sell whiskey and ride around. Don't work none, been selling it all his life. But I work on him.

People from Philadelphia, Washington, and New York come to me. Had a person from New Jersey wanted me to play the number. So I gave her the number and she had won before she got back.

Some cures? For sugar diabetes, take the red oak bark off the north side of the tree. You take it like this because the sap starts rising on the north side. You then takes roots from the huckleberry bush or sassafras. You take a gallon of water, the roots, boil to one half the water, pour out and strain. You then takes one half teaspoon sulfur, one half teaspoon of salt, a tablespoon of sugar. You stir until it's thick. Then add the bark for seasoning. Take one swallow twice a day before you eat.

The bark off the persimmon tree cures the piles. So does the bark off the cherry tree. You can get medicine out of the oak tree too. Don't use the poplar tree for nothing. Just let it set there and let it grow. Ain't no reception to make nothing out of it. All you can get from the pine tree is turpentine. The bark off the sycamore tree made in a tea cures appendicitis.

Most animals not good for people. Polecat parts are good for dumb animals—not people.

Can take devil's shoestring and put it in a bottle and throw it under a doorstep and cast a spell. Don't get me wrong, but I can do it. Can make an X in front of your path. If got the right stuff can make a person come your way. Can take you in by silver money. Then it's hard for you to get rid of me. Can plant money by the side of a grave, come back after seventy-two hours, then give it to any woman, and she'll follow you. I guarantee it!

If a spell is cast on you, you get very nervous. If times you plan to go somewhere, a good feeling will come for you to stay home. You get afraid. At night if you get around and walk a little bit, won't trust yourself. You don't feel good when you see a ghost. A good ghost is in the shape of a person. Then it will vanish. Won't harm you. You see a bad ghost on a dark, rainy-type night. It's like a dog, mule, cow, or maybe has a hyenalike head on it. That's evil.

To turn back any spirit, read the Bible backwards. Start with the bottom and read to the top. The 125th Psalm is the most powerful scripture in the Bible.

Use graveyard dirt, lady face powder. Mix. Then lodestone powder. Mix it. Then take these three and put two brainstones in it. A brainstone is a small piece of lodestone that you find in a large fish head right next to the fish's brain. Put these things in red flannel cloth and use black thread to sew it up. Makes a ball called a "hand." It is the most powerful thing a human can put in his hands. It's good for anything. Put it in your brassiere or anywhere you can keep other people's hands off. It turns back all evil. Makes everything pleasant, peaceful. I guarantee it can keep your boyfriend from anyone but you. If you put Hoyt's Cologne on it every thirty days, will last you all your life. You don't have to get frustrated and use the Lord's name in vain. Just talk to him peaceably. This thing can make you think things to work. It has a determination.

After this conversation, Jones gave me a "hand" that he made for me for a "very small price" and I departed.

Jones portrays many characteristics of the typical conjurer. He kept apart from the other children in his youth and spent much time alone. His family contained other members gifted in conjuration. Jones was extremely proud of his Indian blood and his knowledge of their craft. It is also noteworthy that his family came from New Orleans, center of voodoo for the African slaves. Voodoo knowledge spread out from this area. Magic numbers were used by Jones. His seventh sister was the wisest. He also fully believed in the good and evil spirits and knew methods to cope with them. He was proficient in his knowledge of herbal medicine, utilizing animals and plants in his cures. Many of his cases dealt with the personal affairs of his clients. Thus his value largely lay with the psychological relief that he could give.

According to Mary Hicks Hamilton in The Raleigh *News and Observer* in 1948, a conjurer famous for the "spells" that he broke was Joe Sorrell, who lived near Windsor in Bertie County around 1850. He believed in the mystic and in ceremony, and was very clever. He was successful in breaking evil spirits mainly because he himself had cast the spells. He would throw objects such as bones, roots, herbs, and dead frogs under someone's doorsteps. Then the person knew that someone was trying to bewitch him. An animal or fowl or fruit tree would die and the person knew that more trouble would come. So he would go to the doctor for help. Sorrell would listen carefully to the story and then offer a cure. Sometimes he would tell the client to stick nine pins into a little doll the doctor gave him. Sometimes the patient was given a picture and told to shoot a silver bullet into the heart of it. He would be told to take three sips of pure apple vinegar and to sleep with a Bible under his head. Someone finally saw Sorrell tossing roots under a doorstep, and word went around that he was a witch as well as a doctor. He lost some of his "business" that way, but until his death some people still went to him.

This isn't the only story describing the fading status of some conjure doctors. Mrs. Irvin Coggins of Conway in Northampton County made this statement: "Old Testament days, there was witches here and they could conjure you. Now they's bitches here; and ain't nothing they can do."

My father is A.A. McLean, M.D., of Murfreesboro. Several tales he told me of Murfreesboro in 1971 exhibit the unsound nature of some forms of conjure practice.

> I have heard that my Negro patients used to go to Jimmy Jordan to have their pains cured. He would have them quickly drink warm glasses of salt water or soapy water to induce vomiting. He would have them vomit in a bucket and while they were doing this, he would slip a turtle or lizard in the bucket. Then

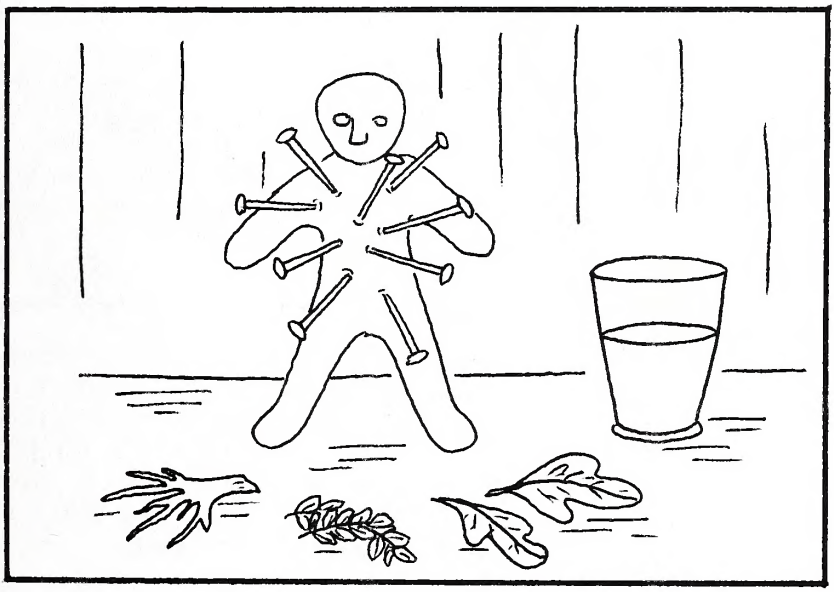
he would tell them that this animal had been eating out their insides, but they were now cured.

This Negro woman went to this faith healer outside of town and the base fee to see her was thirty dollars. And she paid the thirty dollars and the healer looked at her and examined her and told her that she was going to throw this egg on the floor. If the yolk had a bubble in it when the egg broke, that meant that she had a cancer. So she threw the egg on the floor and sure enough there was a bubble in the egg yolk. The faith healer told her to cover the egg yolk with a $20 bill and she would tell her how to get rid of the cancer. So with her last $20 bill, the colored woman covered the egg. So the faith healer took her into another room and told her that she had to go home and wrap her whole lower body with $20 bills and this would help. She had, with strict attention, to wear it for 24 hours and the cancer would be cured. So she went home and figured that this would take $180 to cover her lower body. So she, not having any money, sent her husband to his bossman. He told the bossman that his wife needed $180 to get this cancer removed. The boss thought that she was going to the hospital so he advanced the money. So the woman got the money and covered her whole lower body with $20 bills, wore them overnight, and then went back to the faith healer. The faith healer said, "You have done the proper thing, but in order to guarantee the cure, we are going to have to get rid of those bills right now, because it has drawn out the cancer and it is in these $20 bills. I'm going to take them off and clean them and you come back in a day or two and I'll give you your $20 bills and they'll be safe then." So the Negro lady let her do this, and went back the next day and the bills weren't clean enough and went back the next day and they still weren't clean. The reason that we know this story is that the lady went to the local physician and wanted to make sure the cancer was healed enough. And, of course, he examined her and there was no cancer to begin with. Since then, the lady has been back four or five times for various and sundry excuses and hasn't got any of her money back. So the whole fee for curing the nonexistent cancer was $180 plus the $20 plus the $30 which amounts to $230.

How do modern technology and conjure medicine correlate? The following story told me by my father shows that the old and the new sometimes merge in a haphazard fashion:

When conjure doctors failed to cleanse a body of evil spirits and his patient died, an elaborate funeral would take place to help the soul of the dead person enter into its afterlife. The conjure doctor, when leaving the home of the deceased, would solemnly cover all the mirrors in the house. This ritual was necessary, he said, because the body would lie in state for several days in his bed. If the mirrors were left uncovered, the dead spirit might try to communicate to the living by appearing as the reflection in the mirror. The people were terrified that they might see their dead relative instead of themselves, so they carefully heeded the conjurer's advice. One evening, after I declared a sick Negro dead, a member of his family asked in a concerned voice, "We'll cover the mirrors, doctor, but do you think that we should cover the screen of the television, too?"

Who can judge the legitimacy of conjure doctors? Many of their patients did survive. Modern pharmacy and hospitals did not fulfill all of their needs. Feelings of security in the familiarity of superstition and homeremedy resulted from conjure. And today people also are attracted by medicines that are not completely worthy: tablets to help cure cigarette addiction, pills to relieve hangovers, beauty aids. An observer can comment that man believes what he wants to believe in medicine—only then will he be healthy. Thus the tradition that cure can be formulated from common man will always attract its disciples.



GEORGE BLACK: A NEW FOLK HERO

by Randy F. Nelson

George Black is a folk artist from Winston-Salem who has gained international recognition recently because he still uses the old ways, even though technology has nearly eliminated his craft in North Carolina. He makes bricks by hand. Eighty-three years ago industrialization couldn't take the place of a master brickmaker; so in 1889, when his father moved the family from Liberty, North Carolina, to Winston-Salem, George Black and his brother Will began learning to make bricks. The father died soon after the move, and the brother more than fifty years ago; but today George Black is healthy and alert at ninety-three, and he still makes bricks with his hands.

CBS News correspondent Charles Kuralt, another North Carolinian, taped an interview with Black in the late summer of 1970, and the resulting "On the Road" feature made a national folk hero of the elderly Negro. As the two men walked and chatted informally, they noted the Old City Hospital in Winston-Salem, now the North Carolina Advancement School for Boys, where Black's first bricks were used. Years later the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Factory, several schools, and fifteen banks in the area were constructed with his bricks. The work of his hands can be seen too in the Old Home Church, the serpentine walls of the Old Salem Restoration, the brick walls and brick house of Salem Square, and the Salem library. Kuralt is right when he concludes that these are monuments to Black.

** *Born in Charlotte and reared in Mooresville, the author switched to English during his freshman year at N.C. State, where is now a graduate assistant pursuing an M.A. in English. Two years ago he first saw George Black on TV and felt that here was a "dignified representative of a vanishing craft." Following a letter to President Nixon's press secretary Ronald Ziegler, the Agency for International Development, Department of State, sent photographs used here.*

Kuralt's August broadcast did more than give national recognition to a local folk celebrity: it impressed politicians and government planning officials in Washington. The Agency for International Development (AID), for example, asked Black to head a mission to the Republic of Guyana in South America to advise the brickmaking business there and to train laborers. In February, President Richard M. Nixon met with Black, and when photographers asked for pictures, the President stepped forward saying, "I want to get closer to Mr. Black so some of that longevity will rub off on me. . . . I think it's marvelous that a man your age is willing to do something for his country" ("92—He's Making Bricks and Friends," *Front Lines*, February 25, 1971, p. 1). Black, his granddaughter Evelyn Abrams, and several assistants left the United States for Guyana the following March.

It is interesting that the Winston-Salem artist was chosen to head the mission over a host of officials and technical advisers in the North American brickmaking industry. The reasoning behind AID's choice is this: Guyana has no heavy industry as such, no automation or electricity in rural areas, and no computerized technology. Contemporary brickmaking methods, therefore, couldn't be used by the population. A skilled artisan, on the other hand, could show villagers how to use native materials in constructing small mills in numerous locations. Although the making of brick by hand is literally thousands of years old, it is an art that is nearly extinct in the United States. Black, one can imagine, came as a godsend to AID planners.

When Charles Kuralt and a television crew followed the expedition to Guyana to film a second broadcast, they found villagers flocked around the elderly North Carolinian at the site of the first clay-mixing mill to be constructed in the country with North American aid. Black analyzed the soil by crumbling the clay in his fingers and pronounced it fit for making bricks. Two oxen were linked to the mill, originally powered by what Black called a "no-account" mule, and the mixing process was begun under his direction. In this country people watching the TV feature saw, perhaps for the first time, how an artisan makes bricks by hand. Previously Black had explained the process to Kuralt when they had talked in his Winston-Salem brickyard.

Earth and air and fire and water are needed to make a brick. George Black begins by examining his soil, sifting it through his fingers and judging the consistency. The clay he chooses to work with must be mixed with sand and water in a large mixing mill driven by a mule. As the animal plods around and around the wooden mixing bin, a grinding dasher churns up a heavy mudlike mixture. The brickmaker himself is nearby supervising the adding of ingredients and constantly checking the thickness of his dough. Beside him is a

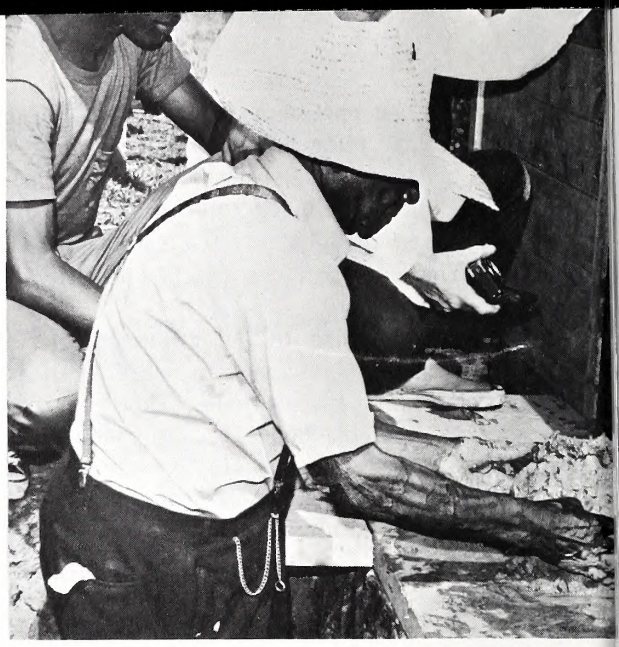
wooden mold, an open-topped box of six compartments, each one the size of a brick. When he is ready, the craftsman can fill each mold using his hands, making sure the corners are packed and the individual bricks are shaped. Finally, the bricks are dried in the open air for three days and then baked in a mud-packed kiln for five days. The result is a product that can easily compete with machine-made bricks or cement.

Black explained to the villagers at Victoria that the average team of workers can expect to produce about four to five thousand bricks a day using his methods. (There are about 12,000 bricks in the average two-bedroom house.) And, indeed, after training and supervision, the workers of the Victoria pilot project increased production from three hundred to four thousand bricks daily. Since the clay is plentiful and cheap around this ex-slave village, drastically increased production means that nearly all villagers can afford homes now, and formerly used building materials can be used for trade. In fact, Prime Minister Forbes Burnham intends to make brick the primary building material of Guyana and to use the country's bountiful lumber resources for export. Watching the first Guyanian brickyard in operation, Charles Kuralt remarked, "American foreign aid is always being criticized, and often for good reason, but this is one small project that isn't costing much, and may end up improving the living conditions of an entire country" (Charles Kuralt, TV transcript from *CBS Evening News*, June 25, 1971, p. 16).

In early May, Black returned to the white frame house at 111 Dellabrook Road in Winston-Salem. He rocked on the front porch and talked to reporters, showing them a souvenir brick of Guyanian clay. "That's a pretty brick," he said, "as pretty as you'll ever see" (David DuBuisson, "They Sure Do Need Bricks," *Winston-Salem Journal and Sentinel*, May 9, 1971, p. A2). He recalled a conversation he had had once with his brother Will, a talk that he had recounted to Charles Kuralt earlier. Their father had just died and the boys realized that they would have to provide a living for the family.

"He said George, he said, we're not going to get to go to school. He said if we don't get to go to school, said we're going to have to work for our living. He said let's learn the trade that would make the most money that would work. That's what we're going to have to do. Said we're not going to get to go to school. He said if we don't go to school, say if we—if we just stand up, hold ourselves up, make men out of ourselves, if we don't know *A* from *B*, he says, we can make somebody call us Mr. Black some day. So that's what we done" (Charles Kuralt, TV transcript from *CBS Evening News*, August 27, 1970, p. 17).

Originally George Black worked for an employer in Winston-Salem, but the brick business slumped not long after he was hired; and

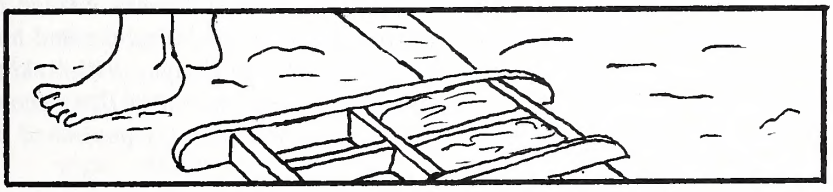


young George soon found that he could do everything his employer required in half a day. The enterprising young man went home and set up his own mixing mill and kiln. In a short time he was producing brick himself, brick of such quality his own boss bought all that he could turn out. Finally, in 1900 he went into business for himself. Today the Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce posts this information in its *Directory of Manufacturing*: George Black Brick, Inc.; George Black, manager; Established 1900; Speciality—hand-made bricks.

At ninety-three George Black refuses to retire. Within weeks after the trip to Guyana, he had scheduled a trip to Williamsburg, where some brick is still being made by hand, and recently there has been talk of an AID mission to Nigeria. For the most part, though, he's willing to let the young people do the work while he generally confines himself to a teaching and supervising role. Thomas Brabham, for instance, has been learning his trade from George Black for some time now, and was able to make the trip to Guyana as an assistant to his employer-teacher. Black was scheduled to become teacher again in August, 1971, when four young Guyanians were to travel to Winston-Salem to learn the brickmaking business from the master artisan: their knowledge is to be put to work in other parts of their native country, implementing Prime Minister Burnham's self-help program.

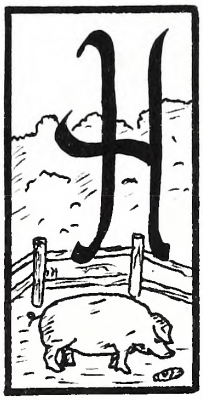
Today George Black is a national folk hero. When his granddaughter wanted to thank Washington bureaucrats for their help during the Guyana trip and for the hospitality of high officials, she wrote a letter that was published in the June 17 issue of *Front Lines*, AID's newspaper. The accompanying photograph was of two smiling men shaking hands, Richard M. Nixon and George Black. He's Mister Black to the President, but Miss Abrams recalls in her letter that the villagers had begun to call him Papa before he'd left Guyana. In a way, it seems, he's a hero also to the people of this tiny country. With little formal education he has become a teacher and diplomat whose commonsense approach to foreign aid has improved the lot of a whole nation.

George Black fashions human dignity out of the four ancient elements. He's a builder in an era known for its impious destructions, and artisan in a craft now dominated by technicians and computers. He's a quiet man thinking out loud about his grandchildren and fulfilling a prophecy: ". . . when I'm dead and gone, maybe one of them'll say, 'That old man, he did something for his family.'"



EDWIN W. FULLER AND THE TALL TALE

by Ted Malone



Here's a simple, straightforward question for those who think they know something about North Carolina folklore. What once-famous novel, known as the "Freshman's Bible" at Chapel Hill, contained both a tall-tale telling contest and a lengthy statement by the contest judge defining that particular genre of folktale?

Have any idea? Well, don't feel bad if the title doesn't come tripping off your tongue. The novel, by Edwin W. Fuller of Louisburg, was called *Sea-Gift* and has long been out of print. Begun by Fuller in 1866 after his sophomore year at the University of North Carolina, it was revised by him in 1872 and published in 1873 by E.J. Hale & Son of New York. Fuller, a genteel but witty spirit, produced a book which has many of the earmarks of the local color fiction which flourished from 1870 to 1900. The book was branded as the work of a Southern sympathizer by the *Publisher's Weekly*, although the *New York World* called *Sea-Gift* remarkably "free of rant." Its greatest popularity was, understandably, in North Carolina, because of its lively treatment of Tar Heel personalities and ways of life. Reviewers praised the young author for his power of description of the details of experience, his sense of humor, and his knowledge of his home state. R.W. Winston, writing about Fuller in 1909 for the *Library of Southern Literature*, said, "In Edwin W. Fuller the State of North Carolina found an interpreter of her domestic virtues, of her simple living, and of her trust in God."

So far as folklore is concerned, *Sea-Gift* is an ocean which has not yet been fished. The storytelling contest is a pivotal point in the novel. Before the contest the participants are boys; after it they are

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** *The author, born 1943, grew up in the Harnett County village of Coats. He has a bachelor's degree from Campbell College and has studied for a master's at the University in Chapel Hill, taking folklore courses with Professors Patterson and Zug. His second book of poetry* The Tapestry Maker *is currently being published by John F. Blair, Winston-Salem.*

men. Indeed, the manner of participation of each of the principal male characters of the book in the storytelling contest is a reflection in miniature of the role he will play throughout the rest of the novel. The competition takes place on a creek bank out in the country near Goldsboro, where the characters have gone for an all-day fishing trip. The setting is the late 1850s. Three of the four participants are young bloods from Wilmington, soon to enter the University, and the fourth is Ben Bemby, crude son of a tenant farmer, who acts as guide for the young aristocrats. John, the voice through whom Fuller speaks in the novel, is to act as judge, and the prize for the winner is a bottle of brandy. Ned, who appears to represent chivalry and is later killed at Gettysburg, tells about an elephant being caught in a spider web. Frank, the "fast" villain who later joins the Yankee army, tells about floating down from an immense cliff on an umbrella. Finally, Ben, the farm boy and eventual heir to the land of which the aristocrats will be dispossessed, tells a whopper about boring out pigs' tails and loading them with powder and shot to foil hog-tail thieves. Here is "Ben's Story":

> Some time along the fust of last year mo'er took her up a house pig, to raise offen the slops and peelins. It growed and fattened a power, and was soon 'bout the likeliest hog on the plantation, only it got so cussed tame twould'n never git outer nobody's way, and was a continuwell being stepped on, and drug outer the house by the leg. Arter the little fool had been grown awhile, she come up one day with eleven pigs, as lively as you ever see, and pime blank like her, a squealin' and runnin' everywhere they hadn't orter. I heard a riddle wonst 'bout a pig under a gate makin' a noise, but he ain't a lighten-bug's lamp to a pig when he's hungry. The older they got the wuss they squealed, till dad said as how he could'n stand it no longer, the sow and pigs had to be moved; so me and him bilt a pen 'bout two hundred yards from the house, and driv 'em down to it. There was a free nigger, with a yard full of children, livin' 'bout as fur from the pen as we did; and the fust night after we'd put 'em up, long todes bed time, I heer a pig squeal like dyin', but I thought perhaps he'd got cut out of his suck, and I never thought on 'em agin till next morning, when I went down to feed 'em; two of the pigs was bloody behind, and, when I looked close, thare tails was gone. I knowed 'twas the niggers, for a fried pig's tail is the best thing a nigger knows how to eat. I told the ole man 'bout it soon's I got back, and he said how we'd wait till the next mornin'. When we went to the pen agin thare was two more tails gone, and two more bloody pigs. Daddy sot on a rail sometime a studin, then he said,

sudden-like:

"Bengermin, go to the house, and fetch me a shingle an my powder horn, an the big gimblet."

I ran off, a wond'rin' what the crashen the ole man was gwine to do with a gimblet and a shingle. Soon as I come back he tole me to get in the pen, and ketch one of the pigs with his tail on. When I histed one up, he tuk him and tied his tail out straight on the shingle, so it twould'n bend. He tuk the gimblet, and started in the tip eend of the pig's tail, and bored it clear out. The bloody shavins come a bilin' up round the grooves of the gimblet, and the pig squealed till the air 'peared to be full of hopper grasses, tryin' to kick in my years. When daddy pulled the gimblet out, the tail looked like a holler skin quill, and would hold 'bout a double load of powder. Daddy poured it chock full, then put a fo-penny nail, with a gun cap on the end of it, down 'mongst the powder, so that it 'd go off if any thing totch it, and then tied it all up with horse hair. When I put him back in the pen that pig didn't have nary a curl to his tail; it stuck out as straight and stiff as if it was a handel to tote him by. We fixed two more in the same way, and then went home. Next morning, when we went down, we found one pig dead, with his hams ready baked, and his back bone drove through his forehead six inches. His tail itself was split open like a shot fire-cracker, and bent backerds like a shelled pea hull. The other two tails had just shot straight without bustin', but the kick of the powder had lifted up their hind legs so high they could'n git 'em down agin, and they was walkin' round the pen on thare forefeet samer'n a circus man. When we came to zamine the pen we found three niggers' fingers blowed off, and sticking to a rail, and little kinks of wooly hair were layin' round as thick as if it had snowed black. Daddy and me then went up to the nigger's house, where we found a good size boy and girl with their hands tied up, and thare heads burnt slick on top. When we asked 'em 'bout it, the boy said the girl was a nussin the baby, and went down to the pen to keep the baby quiet, and he just went along for company like. He said they got to the pen, and was a peepin' through the rails, when one of the pigs come to scratch hisself, and soon's he begin to rub he busted all to pieces. They were mighty badly skeered, and, to keep 'em so, daddy tole 'em them was some thunder-tailed hogs he got from the South. We never had another hog troubled in the least, and when hog-killing time came daddy found it mighty hard to get the hands to help him. That's the end of my yarn. (Chapter XVI.)

John declares Ben's story the winner, and in a full-page explanation of his decision, presents a definition of the tall tale which, with revision, might well fit into a folklore dictionary today.

> The object, gentlemen, of the wonderful story, or yarn, as it is vulgarly called, is not only to excite wonder, but also to evoke a pleasant surprise by discovering relations between dissimilar or contrary things, which we did not think of as possibly existing. If these dissimilars or contraries are too far apart for the mind to recognize any possible relation, then the narration becomes unpleasantly absurd, and we shrink from contemplating it. If, however, apparently improbable relations are brought out in a way that renders them possible, we are surprised and pleased with the discovery. Hence, the most exaggerated narrations are not always the most entertaining, and we derive most pleasure from hearing or reading those stories where improbabilities are unexpectedly brought within the range of possibility, or if beyond it, the fact is ingeniously concealed by possible concomitants. . . . So, were you to tell an audience that you saw a mole move a mountain no one would be pleased or surprised, as the mind would have no effort to pronounce it entirely false; but if you should say you saw a fly trained to play a tune by buzzing his wings from the top to the bottom of a wine glass, the minds of your hearers would be pleasantly occupied for a while in eliminating the true from the false, and your story would be applauded. . . .
>
> Ned, to-day, in his story, erred by placing his relations too far apart. A spider and an elephant! There is no exercise of ingenuity in detecting the falsity of the statement, and the story, from its very improbability, is almost out of the range of competition for the prize. Frank has so mixed his that I scarcely know how to render an opinion in regard to it. The impossible parts are utterly so, and the possible are so easily probably [sic] we are not surprised. To Ben, then, I award the prize, as having produced the most entertaining story, exciting pleasant surprise in each development, and discovering possibilities in the most unthought of relations.

Ned's tale and Frank's tale are both related as personal experiences by the tellers, and in this respect they conform to normal tall-tale format. However, in addition to their being overly improbable, the stories do not have a local setting, a feature usually quoted in modern definitions of the tall tale. Fuller indicated this weakness when he had Ben, prior to telling his tale, say, "Your two friends, John, has both

'em told good yarns, but they went mighty fur from home to get 'em. I'm gwine to tell you what happened right up yonder at the house." B.A. Botkin (*A Treasury of American Folklore*, 1944, p. 490) defined the yarn as "a long, rambling, extravagant tale, with [the] quality of deliberate casualness and improvisation." The tall tale, as a special kind of yarn, has been defined by Walter Blair as a story combining exuberant fact with outrageous fiction. This is precisely the definition that Fuller, in a great many more words, presented over a hundred years ago in 1866.

Ben's story is typical of Fuller's use of dialect. Ben's speech is colorful, but not fantastic, and one can believe that there were persons in North Carolina at that time who spoke in such a fashion. Although *Sea-Gift* was sentimental, after the fashion of its day, an 1892 reviewer for *The Wake Forest Student* found it to abound in "striking scenes and characters true to life." And, while critical of other aspects of the book, Thomas Perrin Harrison, speaking before the State Literary and Historical Association of North Carolina at Raleigh in 1914, called *Sea-Gift* "photographically realistic."

For students of the folklore of this state, it is an unplumbed resource which has lain too long neglected. Although the storytelling contest is of primary interest to folklorists, the novel also contains vivid descriptions of country church meetings, dinners on the grounds, folk remedies, student life and hazing at the University, and even of the daily routine of local academies of that period for small children, including descriptions of customs and games. Fuller describes the city of Wilmington before the Civil War, Chapel Hill as a small village, and Wrightsville Beach when it was a deserted island.

Battle's *History of the University of North Carolina* (1907) comments on Fuller's use of the "Dromgoole Myth" of Chapel Hill in *Sea-Gift*. Dr. Battle was trying vainly to put an end to the duel legend which grew up and eventually gave birth to Gimghoul Castle and the Order of Gimghoul at UNC. Attempting to discredit the book, Battle said the novel had misled students, who "think the incidents were drawn from actual happenings at this University." The fact that *Sea-Gift* was so popular with University students in the late nineteenth century was probably a contributing factor in the survival of this bit of lore.

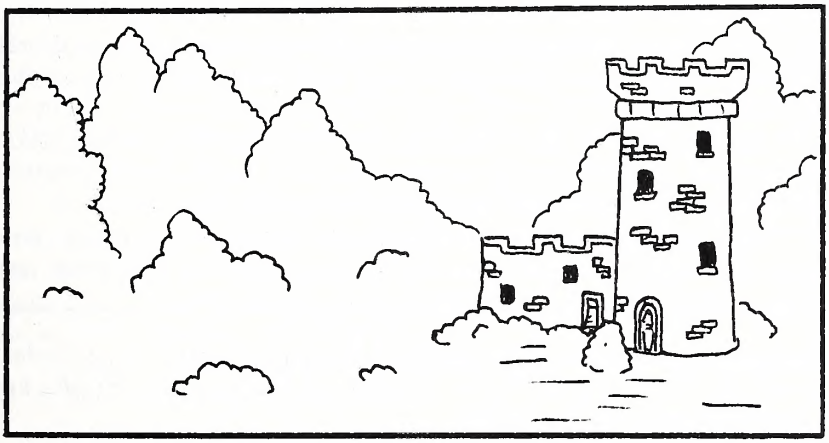
The stories told by Ned and Frank in the novel are probably Fuller's imaginative recreations of facts or plots already available to him. Fuller was a child in Louisburg in the 1850s when an elephant escaped from a visiting circus and sought refuge in the cellar of a house on Main Street. This incident may have inspired Ned's tale. A literary source is likely for Frank's tale, which may have been suggested to Fuller by Munchausen's *Travels*. It is appropriate that the contest winner, Ben's story, is the only one of the three to have

analogues in traditional sources. Among motifs listed in Thompson's *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature* which appear to be related to it are: deceptive division of pigs: curly and straight tails K171.4 (all with curly tails belong to the trickster, others to the dupe. Type 1036); straightening dog's tail H1023.4.1; dog's tail mistaken for gun J1772.12; monkey borrows deer's tail A2241.11; and pursuers hanging on to animal's tail shaken off R231.2.1.

Fuller never wrote another book. He died of consumption in 1876 at the age of twenty-eight. Professor R. L. Flowers, in the March, 1896, *Trinity Archive*, quoted a letter from Fuller's uncle, Dr. George Thomas of Wilmington, who stated that Fuller was disappointed with the manuscript of *Sea-Gift*, thought many parts of it crude and unsatisfactory, and wanted to make extensive revisions which he did not live to carry out.

In 1940, Gavin H. Dortch of Raleigh brought out a reprinting of *Sea-Gift*, limited to 600 copies, and the few copies of the book in North Carolina libraries today usually date from this edition. The *Greensboro Daily News*, on the occasion of the printing, called *Sea-Gift* the "best-loved of novels written about Chapel Hill." Yet who remembers it today? Dortch financed the limited edition after unsuccessfully trying to persuade the UNC Press to reprint the book.

Of significance to North Carolina folklore is the fact that Fuller, writing in 1866, drafted an analysis of the elements of the successful "yarn." In contrast, Mark Twain's famous essay, "How to Tell a Story," was not published in a collected form until 1897, over thirty years later. Certainly, Fuller's paragraphs in *Sea-Gift* on the tall tale must be one of the earliest printed definitions of America's favorite folk narrative genre. Yet no one in the field of folklore studies has given him the slightest credit for it, and the reality of that neglect seems almost like a tall tale in itself.



THE MISERIES AND FOLK MEDICINE

by Mary Armstrong Herrera

Hospitals are grand places, shiny metal and white sheets, serums and needles, sterility and cold, logic and reason—but how dull and sad. Pink pills of today may be more pleasant to take, but natural medicines of the past were cheaper, and diseases, causes, and cures more interesting. The medicine of the past had mystery and romance, and some of this was not that far away and long ago.

The other day I visited my friend, who is not old, only thirty some years. Her husband is an engineer, thus intelligent, and he had just been to the doctor for an antibiotic because he had a severely infected toe. Now this is not unusual, but the strange thing is how his toe became infected.

It seems that on Saturday—this was on Monday when he went to the doctor—the couple went down into their garden very early in the morning to pick beans. The husband had on his torn-up sneakers. The morning dew, according to my friend, had gone through the holey shoes and had caused his toe to "beal." She said her mother had always told her morning dew was poisonous, and she absolutely believed the dew to be the cause of the infected toe.

Another friend, who is not even fifty, told how her grandmother tried to cure her of the chicken pox when she was a tiny girl. She was very sick, so the grandmother wrapped her from head to toe in a quilt and laid her in the chicken yard. Then she shooed the chickens over her three times.

My friend never said if she was cured immediately of the chicken pox, but she said she vividly remembers nearly suffocating to death in that quilt, for it covered her so tightly she couldn't breathe.

Eating chicken manure was another cure for chicken pox, measles, and other skin diseases. A greatgrandmother, who lives near

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** *Mrs. Herrera, from Harrisburg in Cabarrus County, is a student at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, where she has studied under Bertha Harris.*

Kannapolis, swears she did this. She said, though, one does not merely pick the manure off the ground and eat it; it must be mixed with bread as in a sandwich.

One could become immune to poison oak by drinking water that flowed past the area where poison oak or ivy grew, or by eating honey made in the same area. This works only in the mountains, for if a creek is near the sea, I'm told, it will be polluted with sea water.

Apple cider vinegar also was a cure for poison oak, or a poultice of green bean leaves could be made and applied to the infected area. Vinegar was also used for impetigo and athlete's foot. And even today vinegar is used for a douche.

My mother was a nurse, and when we lived in Lenoir, I would listen to her wonderful stories of people's illnesses and operations, and once I remember her telling someone how a doctor told an uneducated hillbilly girl to douche with vinegar. There was one problem. The girl did just as the doctor advised, mixed the vinegar with water—then drank it!

For moles or warts, a cure was to apply castor oil or garlic poultice. Another method was to lay pennies on the warts, and this would make them disappear; or another way was to have an old grannywoman, skilled in country medicine, say a few magic words,

> Snakes, blood, spiders, snails.
> Dogs, cats, bullfrog tails.
> Magic, magic, strange way,
> Warts, go away in a day.

And the warts would disappear. Or you could just believe they would go away, and they would.

Now suddenly last year six warts appeared on my hands. Being too cheap to go to the doctor, I tried to believe they would go away, and sure enough, several months later they disappeared just as quickly as they had come. I felt rather proud of myself, mind over body, till I read in a magazine that sometimes warts come and go, for no reason at all. It was a letdown, for I wanted to believe I had magical powers like a grannywoman.

When I was a teenager, my daddy used to tell me to put turpentine on my face for acne, and, too, someone told me to make a paste of flour and garlic juice for pimples and blackheads. I never did try it, though, for I figured I could get a boyfriend quicker with a bumpy face than smelling like garlic or turpentine.

Insects, and especially vinegar and fatback, played an important part in the "doctoring" of past days.

To ease the pain of a sprained ankle, a body could get a dirt

dobbers' nest, wrap it in brown paper, pour vinegar over it, and apply it to the ankle. The secret was not to break up the nest, but to use it with whatever was in it, dirt dobbers and all.

Also, the suffering from a sprained ankle could be made easy by applying a paste of sea salt and cider vinegar. This was probably used more on the coastal areas than inland. I heard this from an old lady who had lived in Southport all her life.

Breaking a fever was a simple matter, especially in summer. One could catch a granddaddy spider, pull its legs off, and swallow it whole and alive. This was used here in the Concord area, for the man who told me this said he had seen it done several times, but that he preferred to have a fever.

Another cure for a fever, perhaps a less sickening remedy if one had a weak stomach, was to place an onion on top of the bedpost. That same man who didn't care to eat spiders told this and said he had seen a firm fresh onion, on the bedpost, turn completely black and rotten overnight from drawing out the fever from the sick person lying in the bed.

Children often had aches and pains, which even today Dr. Spock mentions in his book as growing pains, and this same wonderful man, who should have been a doctor, said that once his son screamed all night with aches and pains all over his body and in his bones. The next morning he called in an old grannywoman—perhaps she was part witch, he said—and she rubbed lard and soot over the boy's stomach for this "liver-growing," and this cured the boy of his miseries.

Fatback was used to draw out pus in wounds, as well as to break a fever, when it was placed on the wrists of the person with the high temperature. The white membrane or skin from the inside of a raw egg was also used to draw out infection. An old lady from Harrisburg, who "ain't ever been to the doctor" a day in her life, said this would "drive a soul plumb crazy" because the egg skin tightens the area around the infection so tightly and draws out the "bealing" so quickly.

Fatback also pulls out splinters.

As a cure for croup, fatback was placed between the split ends of a branch of a pine tree, heated over an open fire, the juice of the onion squeezed, and this was drunk by the sick child.

Another way to relieve croup or coughing was to dip one's finger in kerosene, run the finger down the backbone of the sick person, and by daybreak, he would be free of the cough and congestion in the chest, and "as well," according to my old friend skilled in these remedies, "as a young bull chasing the heifers."

Sulphur, poured into an onion, which was then roasted in the fire and eaten, was another cure for coughing.

Brown sugar and whiskey, or honey and lemon juice, is another

cough medicine used even today. A few years ago my child's doctor told me to mix honey and lemon juice for my child's cough, and he said this was as good a medicine as any for a simple cough, and he graduated from Duke University.

Spider webs were used as a way of stopping bleeding. The webs were applied to the open wound, but one had to be very careful not to mix spider eggs or baby spiders into the wound, or the spiders would crawl into the blood system and drink the blood and a body would die.

For toothache, the best way to relieve the agony was to place a hot water bottle or hot bricks on the feet and then apply salt, fig tree sap, or a clove to the tooth. Perhaps this holds more truth than one may believe, for dentists today apply oil of cloves to teeth.

For psychological disorders such as nervousness and insomnia, one could drink snakeroot or peppermint tea. To make a sleeping potion a body could mix three teaspoons of apple cider vinegar in a cup of honey and take two teaspoons of this each hour. One thing that puzzles me is how you could get any rest or sleep, if you have to wake up every hour to take another dose.

If a man survived the croup, sores, and the fever during his childhood but came up impotent when he was grown, dandelion tea or pumpkin seeds would make his sex life more active.

(Perhaps women had a medicine to counteract this "activity" in their husbands, but no one has told me that yet. Maybe they hid the pumpkin seeds!)

A love charm, my grandmother told me, could be made from the tea of the yarrow plant. If the one you loved did not love you in return, you could slip him this tea and then his passion would be uncontrollable. I wonder what would happen if he was fed pumpkin seeds along with it. The blood of a rooster or hen, depending on your own sex, could be slipped into a drink, mixed with honey, and this, too, would cure unrequited love.

Speaking loosely of love, there was a way to control a dog in heat from attracting male dogs. She could be fed meat from any female animal, mixed with grape leaves and apple seeds. If this did not keep her from mating, at least she would have fewer puppies, most of which would be male. I would like to try this right now, since I have two female German shepherds with romance problems.

Animals, too, have their own natural medicines, as a dog eating grass when it's sick. A neighbor in Harrisburg, old as the hills, told me this story last summer.

He and a friend, many years ago, were in the woods, over near Concord, sitting by a large pile of rocks. They noticed that a king snake would crawl out from the rocks, go to a plant and seem to eat a bite of it. Then the snake would return to the rocks, stay in about

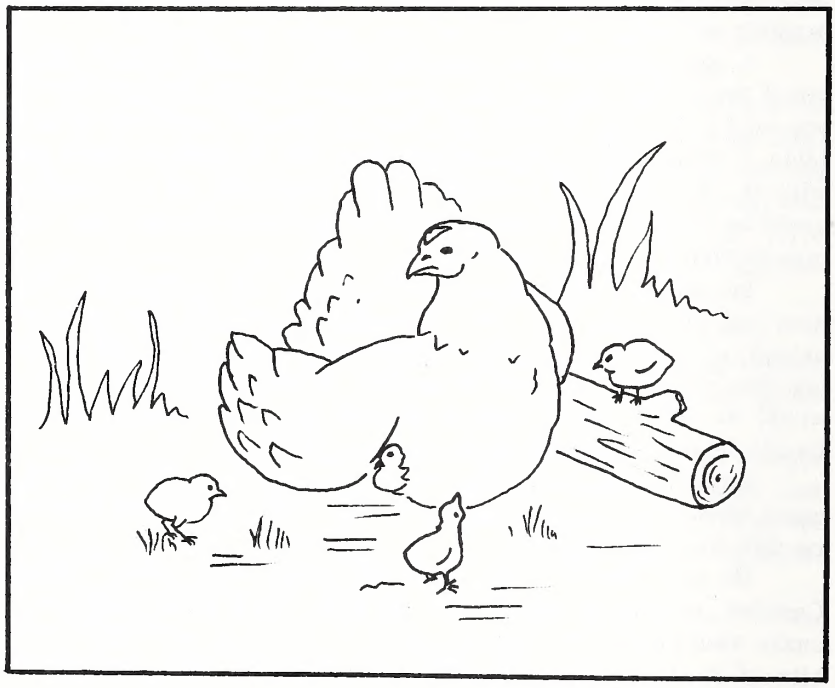
five minutes, and come out and eat of the plant again. This puzzled the men, so to see what would happen, they pulled up the plant and threw it away so the snake couldn't find it. Again the snake came out, seemed to look for the plant, and then returned to the rock pile. After about half an hour, he still had not returned, so the men began to unpile the rocks and found, to their surprise, that inside of the rocks was a nest of copperheads with the king snake, now dead, among them.

What happened, they thought, was that the king snake was trying to fight the copperheads and when they bit him, he would come outside, take a bite of the plant to counteract the poison in him, and with the added strength, return to fight the copperheads. When they destroyed the plant, the king snake's medicine, he died from the copperhead bites.

As I think about these folk medicines, I wonder how much truth is in these cures. Perhaps most of them contained some important vitamin or chemical needed by the body.

This very week a doctor gave me a prescription for birth control pills for some simple female problem which has nothing to do with birth or sex and then a prescription for tranquilizers to counteract the side effects from the birth control pills—all of which sounds terribly frightening to me.

I wonder, I just wonder, if some simple remedy, some tea, some leaf, and a hot water bottle would help just as much. Who knows?



A NEW THEORY ON THE DEVIL'S TRAMPING GROUND

by James M. Donohue

To the people of Chatham County, the legend of the Devil's Tramping Ground has been around for as long as anyone can remember and, for that matter, as long as their ancestors can recall. The basis of this legend is a path about twelve to eighteen inches in width which is in the form of a nearly perfect circle about forty feet in diameter. No form of vegetation is able to survive in this path, although there are trees and grass up to the very edge of it, and there is also a form of wire grass which is found in the center, which, if transplanted, will not grow anywhere else.[1] The legend which has grown up around this natural curiosity is that this is the scene of the Devil's nightly visits, at which time he paces the path trying to conjure up evil deeds to which he will subject mankind. The legend also holds that any objects, no matter what the size, will be cast aside by the Devil as he strides around the circle.[2]

General knowledge of the Devil's Tramping Ground was initially furnished by John Harden in 1946 and 1947 through his radio program "Tales of Tar Heelia" and subsequently through his published version of this program in *The Devil's Tramping Ground* (1949). Articles after this time have been, in essence, reiterations of Harden's work or popular accounts of students spending the night at the Tramping Ground in order to dispel the belief in the Devil.[3]

Several interesting explanations for the existence of this phenomenon have appeared over the years, however. These affirm that this area was once the site of an Indian chief's grave, or an old sugar-cane mill run by horses treading in a circle,[4] or a cow's salt lick, or a site of buried treasure,[5] or even the spot for the landing of a flying saucer.[6]

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All of them appear to be recent inventions largely resulting from Harden's radio programs. The people from the immediate region speak only of the circle as the domain of the Devil. Thus, the other motifs which have recently arisen are largely scientific speculation on the part of outsiders who have had their curiosity aroused. The original legend of the Devil's Tramping Ground remains an integral part of American folklore.

The figure of a circle or a ring has been a motif in folklore for centuries. Magic circles have been used for protection and other circles have spelt doom for those who ventured within them. The rings which seem relevant here are the fairy rings found throughout Northern Europe, primarily in the countries of the British Isles.

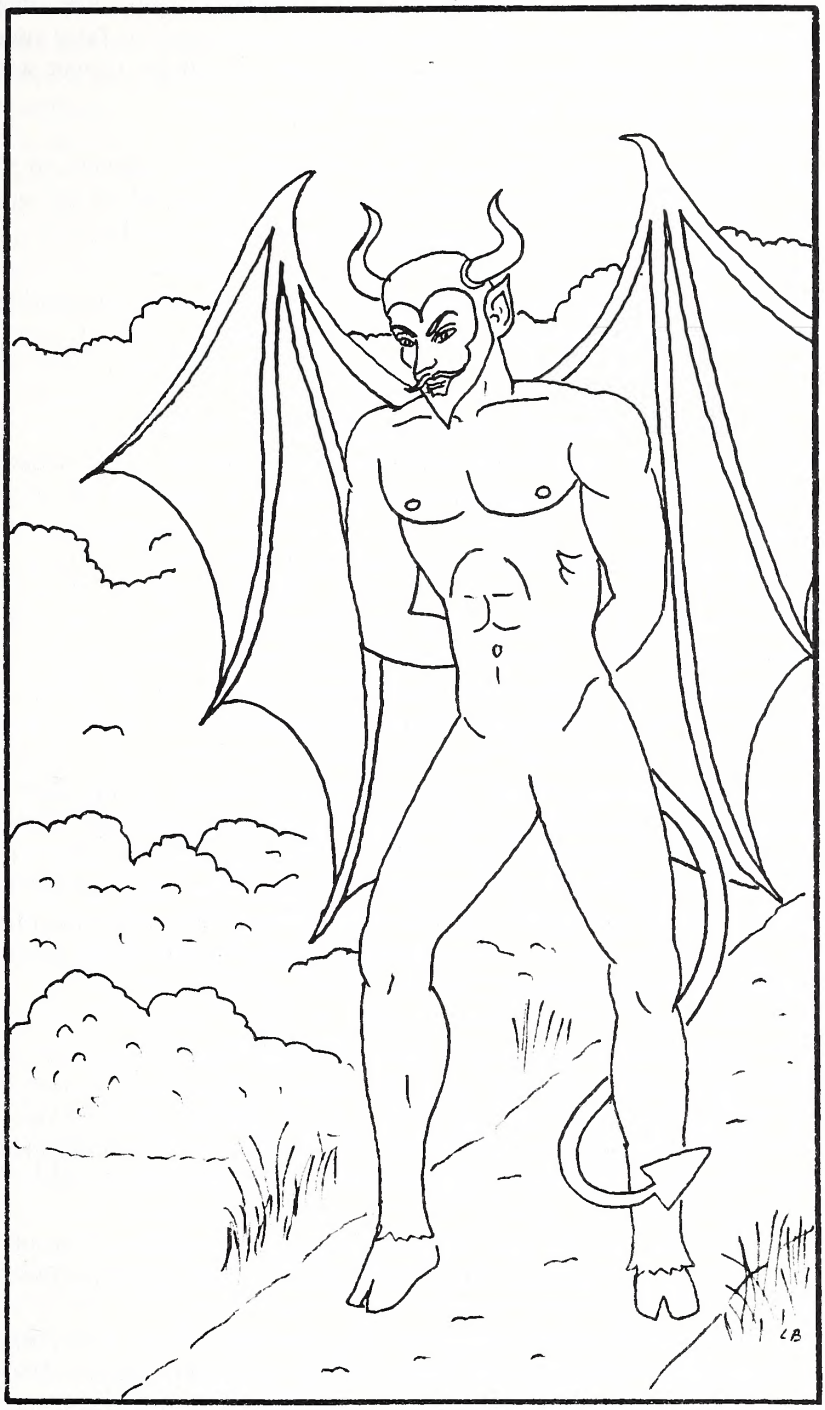
The existence of fairies in folklore is well established, but their description varies because of their presence in the folklore of so many European countries and also because of their ability to change form and appearance. Thomas Keightley puts a rather general label on them by describing them as "different classes of beings distinct from men, and from the higher orders of divinities."[7] The point here is not the existence of fairies, but rather the fact that these elves revelled and danced in circles and ringlets. Although their descriptions may differ from country to country, their practice of dancing in fairy rings is constant, as we shall see.

England was the scene of many ballads and tales concerning the dancing of fairies and the role of circles or rings in their behavior. In her book Katharine Briggs speaks of "fairies dancing in a ring around a fire,"[8] and then goes on to describe a scene from the tale "November Eve":

> A young man. . . was swept into a land of fairies going to a fair. . . They came around him, shrieking with laughter, and tried to force him into the dance. He resisted them until he fell senseless, and when he awoke the next morning, he was lying in a stone circle, and his arms were black and blue with the mark of fairies fingers.[9]

The first of these references merely accounts for fairies who dance in rings or circles, and the second describes what may befall an unsuspecting person who has the misfortune of encountering "bad fairies," those who are prone to mischief or malice. A further example from English folklore is taken from the Shirburn ballad "The Golden God Hyperion" (1610), where good "fayres" are depicted once again:

> "Let Satyres sing the Rundelayes, and
> fayres daunce their twilights round."[10]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The Highlands of Scotland produced much folklore concerning fairies and their activities. We find numerous examples of fairy rings and also the consequences suffered by man should he tamper with their rings. As Robert Chambers states:

> Husbandmen used to avoid, with superstitious reverence, to till or destroy the little circlets of bright green grass which were believed to be the favorite ball-rooms of the fairies.[11]

Chambers' idea here is supported by the following two rhymes which are valuable examples of the folklore of Scotland:

He wha tills the fairies' green,
Nae luck again shall hae,
And he wha spills the fairies ring,
Betide him want and wae.[12]

And, in much the same tone:

He wha gaes by the fairy ring,
Nae dule nor pine shall see;
And he wha cleans the fairy ring,
An easy death shall see.[13]

These two popular rhymes depict the strong belief of the Scottish people in the power of fairies, but they also demonstrate the value of these rings to the fairies. The rhymes are everyday ditties, but a solid example of fairy rings can be found in "Tam Lin," a piece of folklore describing the attempt of a girl to extricate her lover (Tam Lin) from the grasp of the fairies. The following segment is part of the process necessary to free Tam Lin:

> The peasants point out, upon the plain, those electrical rings, which vulgar credulity supposes to be traces of the Fairy revels. Here, they say, were placed the stands of milk, and of water, in which Tamlane was dipped,—in order to effect the disenchantment; and upon these spots. . . the grass will never grow.[14]

This account of rings unable to support the growth of grass[15] compares almost exactly with the physical description of the Devil's Tramping Ground.

Fairies and their subsequent rings for dancing are also present in the folklore of Ireland and Wales, but not in the abundance of Scotland and England. Keightley offers a rather mysterious explanation:

"The Fairies of Ireland. . . are fond of music, but we do not in general hear much of their dancing, perhaps because on account of the infrequency of thunder, the fairy rings are less numerous in Ireland than elsewhere."[16] Welsh folklore also reveals few references to fairy rings but there is a fine example found in the legend "Rhys at the Fairy Dance" (collected in 1827) in which Rhys is lost but found again when several people venture to a nearby fairy ring. By putting their feet on the outward edge of the fairy ring, they all "heard the sound of many harps, and saw within a circle, about twenty feet across, great numbers of little people. . . dancing round and round, Among them they saw Rhys."[17] This example is significant in that actual dimensions of the ring are stated and also in that, again, the power of fairies over men is demonstrated.

The similarities between the Devil's Tramping Ground and various aspects of these different accounts of fairy rings are striking. Both are circular in shape. In addition, they both stand out from the geography around them in one way or another. The Devil's Tramping Ground supports no form of vegetation in its path, like several fairy rings in ancient folklore, although some of the fairy circlets have plush green grass. In any case, they all differ somewhat from the surrounding terrain. Another aspect which they have in common is that if disturbed in any way, something will happen. In the case of the Tramping Ground, an object in the path will be moved by the following morning. People do not venture near this area at night for fear of the Devil. In a similar fashion, it has been shown through the examples of the Scottish fairy rings that human disturbance of the rings may result in death or some less misfortune. The most important aspect here, however, is the physical resemblance of these natural phenomena and the fact that one is called the Devil's Tramping Ground while the others are referred to as fairy circles.

This observation leads directly to the hypothesis that the Devil's Tramping Ground is really a fairy ring which has been transferred to the United States. There are two main reasons why this single ring in North Carolina is deemed the nocturnal habitat of the Devil, while so many similar circles in Great Britain are uniformly associated with fairies. First, although North Carolina was initially inhabited by British immigrants, many folk superstitions did not come across the Atlantic with them, at least not those dealing with belief in fairies. The most substantial evidence for this lack of transmission between Europe and America is Ernest Baughman's *Type and Motif-Index of the Folktales of England and North America*, which lists the different fairy motifs, and describes in which part of the country they were found. From Baughman, it is clear that very few fairy motifs are found in the folklore of America as compared with that of Great Britain. In

fact, of Baughman's 126 fairy motifs, only 20 are listed as coming from American sources.[18] This comparison demonstrates rather conclusively that the fairy motif remained largely in Great Britain despite heavy immigration to this country. The motifs concerning the Devil, however, fared better in the transition and, according to Baughman, 75 of his 226 motifs are accredited to this country.[19] This is a much greater percentage than that of the fairy motifs.

The second reason for the circle in Chatham County being called the Devil's Tramping Ground is both superstitious and religious in nature. At the time rural North Carolina was being settled, belief in the Devil was at a fever pitch. F. Roy Johnson states that the Devil "was an untiring activist who constantly went forth in person to promote his influence among the growing tide of settlers."[20] This belief in His Satanic Majesty is easily evinced in North Carolina as one follows the pioneers' westward movement across the State. Twenty-five natural formations are named after the Devil.[21] In the early days, evangelical preachers began drifting into the south preaching fire and brimstone, and awakening in the settlers a new form of emotionalism.[22] These ministers were responsible for a revival movement which "engraved upon the minds of the people the great importance of the Devil."[23]

Thus, as a result of both superstitious belief and religious instruction, the pioneers frequently "encountered" the Devil and attributed many strange natural formations to his powers.

In the case of the Devil's Tramping Ground, it appears that British settlers migrating to the North Carolina wilderness retained the old beliefs in circles and the associated power of fairies over human beings, but substituted the Devil for the fairies. The transformation was due to the decline in the belief in fairies at the time of their migration from Great Britain. Such a theory accounts for the original legend of the Devil's Tramping Ground, but now that this legend has become popularized and new modern motifs have appeared, it seems that the Devil is in danger of being replaced by spacemen from another planet.

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1. John Harden, *The Devil's Tramping Ground and Other North Carolina Mystery Stories* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1949), p. 55.

2. *Ibid.*

3. "Superstition Is Debunked By Students" (*Greensboro Daily News*, Oct. 1, 1964). From the clipping file, North Carolina Collection, Wilson Library, U.N.C.

4. Harden, p. 57.

5. R. H. Stone, "Devil Paces Chatham County" (*Durham Morning Herald*, July 26, 1959). From the clipping file, North Carolina Collection, Wilson Library, U.N.C.

6. Jimmy Stevens, "A Night at the Devil's Tramping Ground," *North Carolina Folklore*, 15 (May, 1967), 28.

7. Thomas Keightley, *The Fairy Mythology* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1870), p. 3.

8. Katheryn Briggs, *The Fairies In English Tradition and Literature* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1967), p. 20.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

10. Andrew Clark, *The Shirburn Ballads, 1585-1616* (London: W. and R. Chambers, 1870), p. 324.

11. Robert Chambers, *Popular Rhymes of Scotland* (London: Clarendon Press, 1907), p. 64.

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Ibid.*

14. Lowry C. Wimberly, *Folklore in the English and Scottish Ballads* (New York: Fredrich Ungar, 1928), p. 390.

15. *Ibid.*

16. Keightley, p. 363.

17. *Ibid.*

18. Ernest W. Baughman, *Type and Motif-Index of the Folktales of England and North America* (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1966), pp. 203-224.

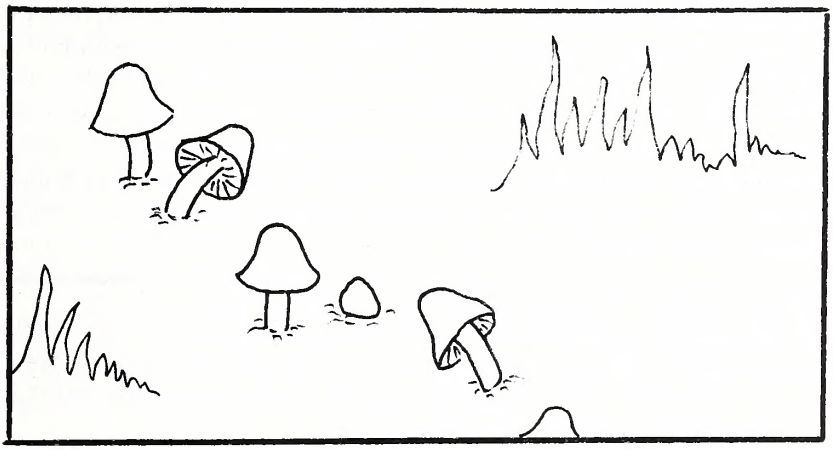
19. *Ibid.*

20. F. Roy Johnson, *Witches and Demons in History and Folklore* (Murfreesboro, N.C.: Johnson Publishing Co., 1969), p. 71.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 72.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 88.



THE SONGS OF CALEB MASHBURN

by John Allen Davidson, Jr.

aleb Mashburn appears to be in his early seventies, a leathery man who has spent most of his life as a farmer and lumberman. He now lives about fifteen miles from Murphy, North Carolina, in the Hanging Dog community of Cherokee County with his second wife, whom he married five years ago.

I first met him in 1963 through my father, who works for the North Carolina Department of Veterans' Affairs. He knew Mashburn as a veteran of World War I, and had visited him in his home then about two miles from Murphy in a section known as Factorytown Ridge. My father had noticed that Mashburn had an old banjo with no strings in the corner of his living room, and he suggested that I might learn some songs from him. I ran into Mashburn the following Saturday morning, standing on the street corner in Murphy, where old-timers gather each week to talk, spit, and watch the traffic. I was introduced to him and found him to be a friendly, though rather shy sort of man. He has a long, narrow face and sharp features with alert, bright eyes. He is mostly bald, except for a white fringe around the ears, and generally his appearance reminds one of the North American bald eagle, except that there is no fierceness in his eye. After talking about the traffic, the weather, and my father (who had helped him with problems concerning his veteran's pension), I asked if he played the banjo. At first he answered no, but later admitted that he used to pick some a long time ago. He hadn't ever played the "new way" (i.e., the Scruggs style 3-finger picking). I told him I was interested in learning to play the old way, and he finally agreed to play for me after I told him I had a brand new banjo at my house. He was interested in seeing how they made banjos nowadays, he said.

** *The author writes: "I am a 2nd-year graduate student in English at U.N.C., minoring in folklore, and sometime singer and picker." He wrote this paper in January, 1971, for Folklore 146, taught by Professor Charles G. Zug III.*

Caleb Mashburn examined the banjo and was most impressed with the tone it could produce, even though it had been raining early in the day. My banjo had a plastic head and was much less susceptible to loss of tension because of damp weather than the traditional calfskin-headed banjo. Mashburn explained that he had not played the banjo in over twenty years, because his old friends who had "made the band" had died. I learned that he had played for dances and parties in the Murphy area between 1910 and 1918, when he joined the army. He spent his military career in bases in the South, and after his discharge in 1919, he began to play for dances and parties again. Toward the end of the twenties and into the early thirties, there were fewer such gatherings, and his interest in playing gradually waned. He stopped playing because "by then people had got other things to do. They listened to the radio and went to the picture show in town."

Caleb Mashburn learned to play when he was young, from several people around Murphy, He remembers few banjo players among his army acquaintances. He was never a "show singer" or a lead instrumentalist in the band. "We'd have fiddles to play the tune," he explained, "and we would have one or two banjos or guitars, just to keep the time. They was just old-timey tunes that everybody knowed, and sometimes they was words with them, but nobody hardly sung the words. It was just the tunes for people to dance to."

I recorded Mashburn three times, first in August, 1963, then in February, 1964, and again in July, 1965. Of the three recording sessions, the first is the best one, and the one from which the tunes in this paper are taken. The three tunes recorded in August,1963,were "Shortnin' Bread," "Free Little Bird," and "Mamma's Darlin' Child." At all three recording sessions, and at other times when he played for me but was not recorded, these three songs were the ones he usually chose to play. Three other songs that he played for me were very fragmentary, and he asked that I not record them, though I learned the tunes from his playing. Two were among the most common mountain banjo tunes, "Cripple Creek" and "Cumberland Gap." The third was a single verse of a common mountain banjo song called "Goin' Down to Town." The three songs not recorded, with the three recorded on August 24, 1963, are the only songs I have ever heard Caleb Mashburn play, and I believe they represent most of the tunes which he is able to remember. All six tunes fall definitely in the usual canon of mountain dance music.

Very little need be said about his versions of "Cripple Creek" and "Cumberland Gap." He played both these tunes in the standard G tuning of the banjo, gDGBD. He remembered no words to "Cumberland Gap," and of "Cripple Creek," only the chorus:

Goin' up Cripple Creek, goin' on a run,
Goin' up Cripple Creek to have some fun.[1]

His "Goin' Down to Town" consists of only one verse, which serves as the chorus in some versions. The song was probably a Negro folk creation which was then adapted and printed in minstrel books before the Civil War.[2] From the minstrel shows, it passed back into folk circulation among Southern blacks (Lomax, p. 507). The song may have entered the mountain folk culture through the minstrel shows or the printed songbooks, but it seems more likely that it was passed on directly from the Negro folk to the mountain whites sometime after the Civil War, probably in the 1870s, 1880s or 1890s, when many Negroes from lowland plantation backgrounds came into the mountain region, initially to work on the railroads then being built. The Negro versions of this song, such as the one given by Lomax (p. 507), usually have verses concerning "hard times," and Lomax's version, "Lynchburg Town," has elements which strongly suggest the post-Civil War era of sharecropping and widespread economic problems:

'Baccer sellin' high,
'Baccer sellin' high,
'Baccer sellin' at fifteen cents,
Nobody there to buy. (Lomax, p. 507)

In the mountain-dance-band tradition, the tune, rather than the words, is the important element. This song was found to be an excellent banjo and fiddle tune, and usually only the chorus survives from the Negro song. Louise Rand Bascom (*JAF*, XXII, 17) reported a version from the western North Carolina mountains, and commented that the fourth line was always left to the invention of the singer. Her version is:

I'm goin' down to town,
I'm goin' down to town,
I'm goin' down to town,
To chaw my terbaccer down.

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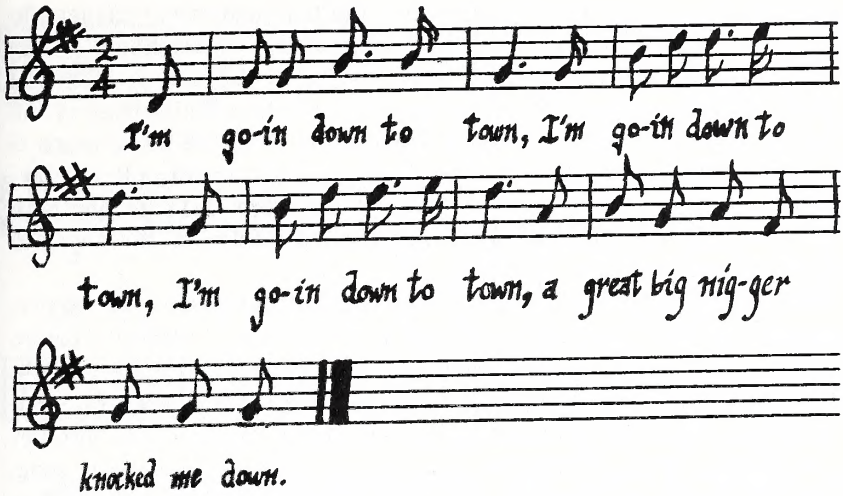
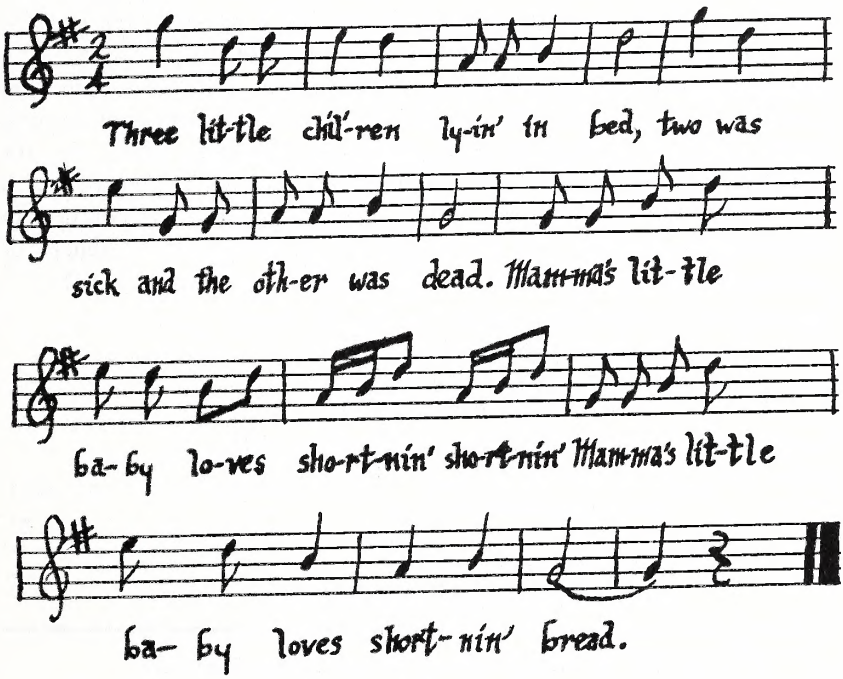
[1]See Brown III, 354; Lomax, 232; Sharp II, 352, 358, for complete versions. For "Cumberland Gap" see Brown III, 381; Lomax 162; Randolph III, 264.

[2]See White, 178. The most common title is "Lynchburg Town," though the names of many other towns are substituted in some versions to localize the song.



As we will see, Mashburn's version is very similar to Bascom's, and he has improvised the last line, true to the tradition.

The next song, "Shortnin' Bread," was a genuine plantation song (Lomax, p. 504) which may have had a similar transmission history to that of "Goin' Down to Town." It became a favorite of



mountain banjo and fiddle players, and the tune underwent changes to adapt it to the mountain styles. A comparison of Mashburn's tune with the more familiar one (such as the one in Lomax, p. 504) will show that the mountain version is made to fit the peculiarities of the banjo, while the Negro version is more easily sung. In the common *G* tuning of the banjo, gDGBD, the Negro version is difficult to play, while Mashburn's version can be played with very little fretting with the left hand, because his tune is made up mostly of the notes to which the open strings are tuned.

Mashburn's version of "Mamma's Darlin' Child" consists of two verses, the first of which is related to "Too Young to Marry" (Brown III, 140-141). Arthur Palmer Hudson's note to this song in the *Brown Collection* says "this scrap of song I have not found elsewhere," and it appears to be more common in western North Carolina than in other areas.[3] The *Brown Collection* notes that it is primarily a banjo song. Two of the *Brown* versions, 107-A and 107-B, emphasize the lines "I'm my mammy's youngest son / I'm too young to marry," which are similar to Mashburn's first verse. *Brown* 107-C is closer to the total structure of Mashburn's song, and the tune is similar also. Hudson says the second verse "belongs to quite a different song." However, I think it must have been common practice for mountain banjo pickers to combine the "mamma's darlin' child" verse with the "love somebody" verse, at least in southwestern North Carolina. Mashburn's version does this, just as does the *Brown* 107-C version from Leicester in Buncombe County. The other *Brown* versions were collected in Watauga County, an area which is farther away, and not included in normal travel and exchange (especially in earlier years) such as was usual between Buncombe and Cherokee counties. There is, for example, a direct railroad line between Murphy and Asheville, which has related the two areas culturally since the turn of the century. In other words, Murphy may be said to be in Asheville's "sphere of influence." Here is the Buncombe County version (*Brown* III, 141):

I'm my mamma's darlin' chile,
I'm my mamma's darlin' chile,
I'm my mamma's darlin' chile,
I'm most too young to marry yet a while.

I love somebody, yes I do,
I love somebody, yes I do,
I love somebody, yes I do,
And I wish somebody loved me too.

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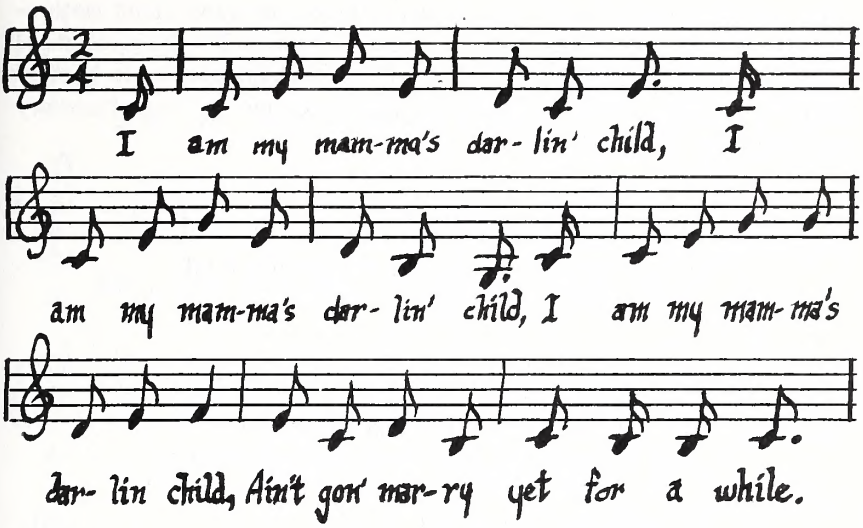
[3]Randolph, III, 98-99 reports versions from Missouri.



Carl Sandburg's *American Songbag* prints a version of "Love Somebody, Yes I Do" which came from the mountains of southeastern Kentucky. It includes Mashburn's line "love somebody, but I won't tell who," and the tune is similar to Mashburn's. Sandburg's arranger for this song, Alfred G. Wathall, pointed out to him that the tune and the dance steps connected with it come from an old English contra dance (Sandburg, p. 140).

Mashburn's version of "Free Little Bird" is interesting because it contains elements found in many versions from many places. I have not found any one version that combines all these elements as completely as his.

It should be noted that Mashburn plays the banjo and also sings, but never simultaneously. Usually, if I could coax him into singing, he would sing the words of the song, then play it on the banjo. As in the case of the other songs, Mashburn's banjo version of "Free Little Bird" has a more strict rhythmical structure than the vocal version. His singing is irregular, sometimes erratic, and usually fragmentary, which is not surprising since he has never considered himself a singer, has never sung much, and has "lost out on" (forgotten) some of the words.

From the banjo version of "Free Little Bird" it would appear that the metrical pattern of the verses in Mashburn's version should be

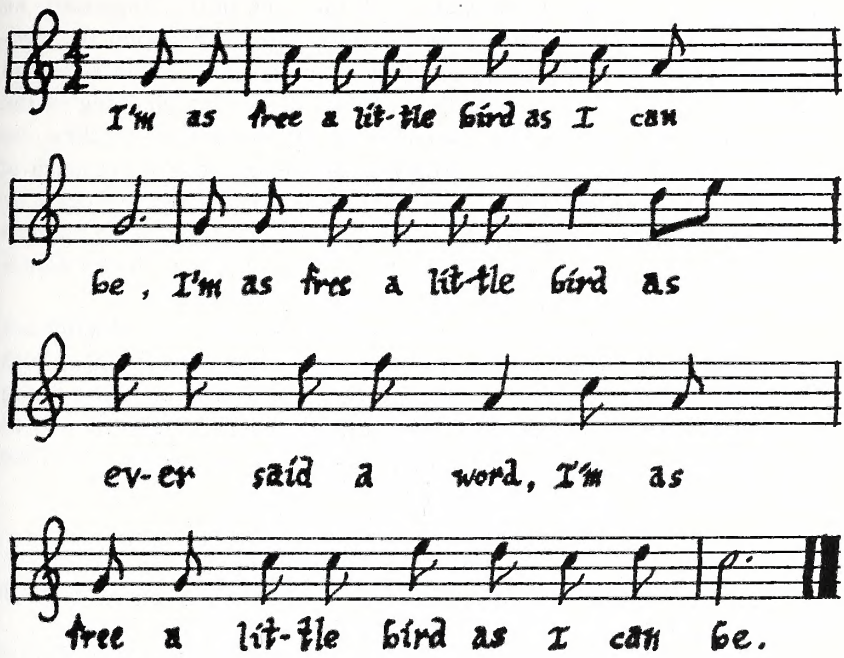
' u ' u ' u ' u ' u '	A
' u ' u ' u ' u ' u '	A
' u ' u ' u ' u ' ' u ' u '	B
' u ' u ' u ' u ' u '	A

The version of Mashburn's words given below is transcribed meticulously from the recording, but a clearer picture of the song, as most likely he knew it once, will be given if the AABA pattern is kept in mind. The lines which are probably omissions due to loss of memory are indicated by ellipses.

* * * * * * * * * * * * *	(A)
I'm as free a little bird as I can be	A
I'm as free a little bird as ever said a word	B
I'm as free a little bird as I can be	A
* * * * * * * * * * * * *	(A)
* * * * * * * * * * * * *	(A)
I'll fly around your farm and I'll do you no harm	B
And I'll build my nest in the high willow tree	A
* * * * * * * * * * * * *	(A)
I'll never build my nest on the ground	B
I'll build my nest in the high willow tree	A
Where the bad boys cannot bother me	A
Where the bad boys cannot bother me	A
I'm as free a little bird as I can be	A
I'm as free a little bird as I can be	A
I'm as free a little bird as ever said a word	B
Oh, I'm as free a little bird as I can be	A
* * * * * * * * * * * * *	(A)
* * * * * * * * * * * * *	(A)
Oh I'll sit on the hillside and I'll weep all the day	B
For there's no one a-carin' for me	A
For there's no one a-carin' for me	A

The *Brown Collection* (III, 293-297) lists this song as a variant of "Kitty Kline," a song so well known in western North Carolina that Louise Rand Bascom said it "might be called the national song of the highlanders" (*JAF*, XXII, 240). The *Brown Collection* notes point out that there are usually two themes found in versions of this song. The first is the "take me home" theme, as in the first of Miss Bascom's variants:

Take me home, take me home, take me home,
Take me home, take me home, take me home,
When the moon shines bright, and the stars give light,
Take me home, take me home, take me home.



The second element is the "free little bird" theme, as in Mashburn's version. A third element, also mentioned in the *Brown Collection*, is the frequent inclusion of the "who will shoe your pretty little feet" verses from "The Lass of Roch Royal" (Child 76). In many of the versions which have been collected, there are verses including "I wish I was a little bird" (or sparrow, honey-bee, or fish, etc.). This element would seem to relate the song to love lyrics such as "Come All Ye Fair and Tender Ladies" (q.v. Belden, 477-478, also Brown III, 290-293).[4] Mr. Mashburn's version excludes all these themes except the "free little bird" element, making his version a very charming animal song, with a touch of human loneliness in the last verse. I have not been able to locate any other source for what is, to me, the best line in Mashburn's version: "I'll fly around your farm and I'll do you no harm."[5]

Caleb Mashburn's banjo style is similar to the "knock down" or "frailing" style, except that instead of using his whole hand to hit

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[4]Ralph Rinzler, in liner notes for a recording, "Old Time Music at Clarence Ashley's, Volume II," Folkways FA-2359.

[5]For other variants and related songs, see Bascom, *JAF* XXII, 240-241; Belden, 489; Brown III, 293-297; Carter, *JAF* XLVI, 49-50; Fuson, 120; Perrow, *JAF* XXVI, 134; Randolph IV, 156-158, 188; Sandburg, 338.

the strings on the downward stroke with the back of his fingernail, he brushes up and down with his index finger only. This kind of "two-finger" style (the other being his thumb) produces a sound which is not unlike strumming, but with the addition of regular plucking of the fifth string. By varying the strength of his downward strokes, he emphasizes the melody note. However, Mashburn uses a minimum of fretting with his left hand, and does not play intricate tunes or complex ornamentation as a fiddler, or as some old-time banjo players do. His playing was originally shaped by his function in the dance music band of keeping the time so the people could dance.

Mashburn's songs are not rare, and his playing and singing are not unusual, but rather typical. He is a man of traditional ways, with a love for that tradition and a long life rich with music and good times. If this examination of his music shows nothing else, I hope it will at least illustrate the fact that people still exist who know and love music played and sung "the old way."

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* * *

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Notes

Last March the North Carolina Arts Council made its fifth grant to the editors of *North Carolina Folklore*. Over the years, these grants have considerably altered the direction of the publication. For instance, its two regular issues in May and November have frequently been augmented by one or more special issues, like the Student Issue last February. If all goes well, another extra issue in August will contain articles appealing particularly to young readers, and a thousand or more copies will be mailed free to grammar school libraries throughout North Carolina.

Arthur Palmer Hudson, unanimously elected last December as its first Honorary Life Member in the more than fifty-year history of the North Carolina Folklore Society, is Kenan Professor Emeritus of English at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. In bestowing the honor, the Society cited Dr. Hudson "in recognition of his personal achievements as a scholar and teacher, his contributions as executive secretary-treasurer of the Society 1943-1963, and his establishment and editing of the journal *North Carolina Folklore* 1954-1964." Dr. Hudson had been previously elected honorary president for life of the Mississippi Folklore Society. He founded that society in 1927 and gathered and published a large body of Mississippi folklore before moving to North Carolina in 1930. He is the first to be so recognized by the two folklore societies. Before these honors came to him he was elected Fellow of the American Folklore Society, and was appointed advisory editor of *Southern Folklore Quarterly* and of *Mississippi Quarterly*.

Everyone likes an occasional pat on the back, especially from one who knows what he's talking about. Not long ago came a letter from UCLA's distinguished Wayland D. Hand with these words: "*North Carolina Folklore* seems to get better with every number, and I heartily congratulate you on bringing out a high-quality state folklore journal in such a pleasing format." Professor Hand is assiduously pursuing his monumental work on American Folk Medicine and had written an inquiry to us about obtaining a copy of Bruce Roberts' "wonderful picture of ginseng root" in *NCF* last November.

LEGEND OF TERROR FROM MADISON COUNTY

by Manly Wade Wellman

It is told in various frightening forms. It drips with blood, echoes with hollow, ghostly footsteps. Some swear it is true. Others deny it for the sake of telling it.

John A. Parris, the Asheville author and folklorist, heard it more than a generation ago. He wrote an account for *State* magazine, which appeared in the issue of February 9, 1935, and which was republished in that of April 26, 1947. He names names, quotes dialogue directly, goes into intricacies of detail. William P. Sharpe included a shorter form of it in his Madison County essay for his third volume of *A New Geography of North Carolina*. Nobody seems to have protested its charges, or to have called for retraction or apology. Here, in substance, is what that published account says:

Alfred B. Chunn operated the Chunn stock-stand on the Buncombe Turnpike in the 1840s. If we accept this published account, nobody knows where he came from. The main building was of stout timbers, two stories high, with a pillared porch below and a roofed balcony above, running all the way along the broad front. Each story had six spacious rooms. A leanto behind housed a kitchen, with a storage space over it. This tavern stood almost within shouting distance of Hezekiah Barnard's rival stand. Chunn's bridge across the river attracted customers from the Sandy Mush neighborhood.

Squads of black slaves waited on guests, tended stables and stock pens, reaped grain over a vast tract of farm lands. Drovers with great herds of cattle and hogs stopped there during the autumn months on their way from Kentucky and Tennessee. Frequently such men found food and lodging excellent, and stopped for a night's stay on the way back.

** *From the Chapel Hill guitarist, folklorist, and author of seventy books comes this excerpt from his* Kingdom of Madison: Some Aspects of a Southern Mountain Region, *to be published within the year by the University of North Carolina Press.*

Creepy rumors of ghosts enlivened days and nights at Chunn's. Particularly interesting was the report of a shadowy wagon that clattered across the bridge at midnight and vanished.

One day, we are assured, a drover returned from the eastern markets, his pockets weighted down with gold and silver from the sale of his beasts. He had supper and stayed the night at Chunn's, and at dawn next day mounted his horse to ride along the turnpike westward.

At a lonely point on the way, a roughly dressed man bounded from a tangle of laurel. His black face scowled, his black hand levelled a big pistol, and he yelled at the drover to halt and throw his money down on the road.

Reining in, the drover tossed a handful of coins upon the stony way between them. The robber stooped quickly and clutched at the money. Swiftly the drover snatched out his own pistol and fired. He saw the man crumple down and lie motionless. Whirling his horse, he galloped back to Chunn's.

Mrs. Chunn met him at the door, and he called out that he had killed a Negro who had tried to rob him.

"My God!" she screamed. "You have killed my husband!"

Then she dissolved into hysterics. The drover, who had had quite enough of entertainment at Chunn's, went riding away again.

Mrs. Chunn recovered and also hurried away, nobody ever found out where. Neighbors found her dead husband, his face and hands blackened, sprawled dead across the scatter of coins. A search party visited the tavern. They found smears and stains of blood in an upstairs back room, and a chutelike passage slanting down to the river's edge. One matter and another convinced the investigators that many a guest had been quietly murdered, stripped of his valuables, and sunk in the swift waters of the French Broad.

And the great tavern stood empty and suspected thereafter, with muffled footsteps and horrifying moans to be heard by anyone plucky enough to visit it after dark. At last it fell to pieces. The story hung over the mouldering wreckage like a huddle of dark mist.

So richly gory a narrative would seem quite enough for all hearers, and better confined to one haunted spot. But this one was not content to stay where the Chunn tavern had stood. It is told all over again, with changes only in name and location, about the Barnett stand on the New Stock Road, not far from the village of Jewel Hill that today is called Walnut.

William Barnett was born in 1813, probably in Tennessee. He bought the site for his stand in 1853. He, too, had a considerable force of slaves, who cleared the slopes of the height called Barnett Mountain and planted thereon great fields of corn to feed the herds

that stopped on their way through. The place became busy and prosperous.

Then, says this version of the story, things happened as others tell them about Chunn's stand—the drover with his fortune in his pockets (a Kentuckian, they call him this time), the ambush by the highwayman with the blackened face, the drover's fatal pistol shot, the horrified cry of the new-made widow when she was told what happened. The late Arthur Ramsey used to add that the drover rode into Marshall and stammeringly tried to tell the authorities about his adventure. They looked at him in baffled disbelief and told him he'd better hurry away to his old Kentucky home, which advice he took.

Cordial, sepia-brown Hugh Watson Barnett of Marshall—"Footsy, his friends call him—relates this story as it was told him in detail by his father, who was the son of a Barnett slave. It is otherwise current in various parts of Madison County, and is met with rather more frequently than the story about the Chunn stand.

And it bobs up again, in *Hot Springs, Past and Present*, a curious little booklet published by Sally Royce Weir at Knoxville in 1906. Miss Weir also relates circumstantially, even with the specific date of June 7, 1875, an encounter by frightened blockade distillers with Indian ghosts on the high shelf of Lover's Leap. There were highwaymen along the Buncombe Turnpike, too, she insists, and she winds up with an account of that house of death. No names or locations are given, other than to say that the house was on the Buncombe Turnpike; but the lonely stock drover, returning with mammoth sums of money, is the hero again. His adventure is told in first person, as though from his written account or from a personal interview.

Late at night he sought lodging, and walked in to find several men at table, with a woman cooking supper. After eating fried chicken and corn pone, he was escorted upstairs by one of the men, who set a candle down in a bedroom and went out, turning the key in the lock.

That was enough to rouse the drover's suspicions. Glancing down, he saw a dark stain on the floor, just where a flounce hid the legs of the bed. He knelt, candle in hand, and raised the flounce. On the floor "lay a dead man, warm and bleeding, his throat cut from ear to ear."

Understandably, the drover's immediate wish was to escape. But he was locked in, and the single window "was small, a mere peep hole, and was nailed down besides." With presence of mind that shed glory on the whole stock-droving profession, he dragged out that butchered corpse and hoisted it into the bed with its bloody face turned to the wall. Then he drew the blankets well up over it. This done, he blew out the candle and posted himself against the opposite

wall, at a point where the door, if opened, would hide him.

Time passed, seemingly years of time. At length he heard stealthy footsteps on the stairs outside. A key grated in the lock, the door swung inward, and several men entered, one behind the other. The drover slipped out as the last man came into the room. As he hurried down the stairs he heard the sound of a heavy blow, as though someone had struck the motionless form under the blankets. Then the drover was outside. He sped to another house, told his story, and found men to return with him. But the house was empty. Those baffled slayers of guests had fled.

All these accounts are forcibly reminiscent of Gothic romances such as once were written for a happily shuddering public by "Monk" Lewis, Lord Edward George Bulwer-Lytton, and Thomas Peckett Prest. The archetype is the ancient Greek myth of Procrustes, whose murder and robbery of guests ended only when Theseus proved too tough for him. It would be interesting, as it seems to be virtually impossible, to ascertain whether the story was first told before or after the spring of 1873, when *Harper's Weekly* published to the world how the bloody Bender family of the Kansas frontier slaughtered customers at their roadside tavern, much in the manner ascribed to Alfred B. Chunn and William Barnett.

Disappointingly for those who love the macabre, the story in both the Chunn and Barnett versions is annihilated by prosaic fact.

Far from being an unheralded comer to the stand on the Buncombe Turnpike, Alfred B. Chunn was well and favorably known. He was the son of Samuel Chunn, who first built the tavern, and, like Samuel Chunn, a man of massive respectability and wide usefulness in his home region. He served in the lower house of the General Assembly in 1846, though probably his political rivals would not accept that as incontrovertible evidence of his character. His father Samuel Chunn spent his final years at the stand on the French Broad, dying there in 1855; and it may be worth pointing out that he died from no more lurid a cause than old age. Samuel Chunn's estate of thousands of acres of land was divided among his heirs, and Chunns continued to operate the stand into the 1870s. Alfred B. Chunn eventually moved to Asheville, and was selling sections of his real estate holdings as late as 1879.

The stand was bought in 1874 by Rachel Frisby, energetic widow of a Confederate soldier, and she operated it even after the tracks of the Western North Carolina Railroad blotted out the Buncombe Turnpike in 1881. Guests were abundant there, some of them permanent boarders. At about the end of the nineteenth century, the young grandson, Ben H. Frisby, came to live at the stand. Today he vividly remembers things that happened there.

No whisper of a murderous career by Chunn did Ben Frisby hear, but there were unchancey phenomena. In the most remote of those six upper rooms, stains that looked like the prints of hands showed on the broad planks of the floor and on the boards of the ceiling. They were brown prints, and others than Ben were uneasy about them, saying they looked like dried blood. Somebody took a smoothing plane and tried to shave them from the wood. It was a useless effort. No matter how deeply the plane cut into the planks, the brown prints stubbornly showed.

Young Ben's bed was in the southwest corner of the big leanto kitchen, while his grandmother slept in the northwest corner. Her sleep was sound, but night after night the boy heard disquieting noises that seemed to originate in the storage loft over the kitchen. Sometimes there came a sudden whirl and clatter, as though a stick were held to the spokes of a spinning wheel in motion. More baleful than that were clumsy thuddings, as of footsteps in the loft.

Ben spoke of these disturbances to his grandmother, who suggested that they were made by a clubfooted rooster in a coop just outside. Ben was too well brought up to dispute with his elders, but he felt sure that they came from the loft. One day he paddled a skiff out on the French Broad and set that clubfooted rooster aswim in midstream. It came home no more, but the nightly sound of footsteps continued.

Ghosts must haunt the place, people said on quiet evenings as gray deepened into darkness and the wind muttered as though in creepy warning. Rachel Frisby operated the stand profitably until her death in 1904. Others occupied it after that, but they, too, talked nervously about things that went bump in the night. Eventually the old house was deserted, and fell to pieces sometime in the 1930s.

Which leaves the Barnett version to be considered and that, too, dwindles away in the unsympathetic light of the realities. William Barnett sold his stand in 1857. Manifestly he could not have been dead, violently or otherwise, or he could never have accomplished the transfer of property. As a matter of fact, like Alfred Chunn, he lived long years in the region, and his numerous and estimable descendants flourish at the present day.

Ben Frisby offers a suggestion. "At night after supper at the old Chunn place, people would gather around the open fire and tell things," he remembers. "Tale-tellers would try to outdo each other. Old Jake Uttinger was a permanent guest when my grandmother owned the place, and he could usually outtalk and outlie everybody. Many a tale made up on the spur of the moment was taken for truth by folks who heard it, and it got passed along."

Nor do such tales lose much in the process of passage. Michael

Thomas of New York City was impressed by some of them as he wrote the jacket copy for *White Lightnin', Fresh Air*, a Polydor, Inc., record album of folk music by Obray Ramsey and Byard Ray. Thomas mentioned rumors of haunted hollows along the French Broad and along the creek bottoms to either side, of a wondrous black fiddle sold by Satan himself for the price Satan usually exacts for his wares. "You hear a lot of queer tales down there, half history, half myth. They talk about the dead in the present tenses up in Madison County, way up in the Smokies on the very edge of your imagination."

People go on insisting that those murders happened, and others deny them. Maybe something or other did happen and was built into a blood-curdling allegation of wholesale slaughter and robbery.

Just what was it?

NOTES

John A. Parris's account is in *The State, a Weekly Survey of North Carolina*, Raleigh, Feb. 9, 1935, pp. 3, 23; and April 26, 1947, pp. 7, 19. Brief material on Alfred B. Chunn and his family is in Sondley's *Buncombe*, II, 763. His transfer of land in 1879 is recorded in Buncombe County Deed Book 42, p. 102.

William Barnett's birth date is recorded in an ancient family Bible, graciously lent by Mrs. Tressalee Barnett Ramsey, who supplied other family traditions. Barnett's land purchase in 1853 is recorded in Madison County Deed Book A, p. 123, and his sale of it, to A. E. Beard, *ibid.*, p. 383.

Several persons other than Hugh Mason Barnett have furnished their memories of the Barnett stand, notably Sheriff E. Y. Ponder of Madison County, who as a boy heard it from Arthur Ramsey and others. Ben H. Frisby, Sr., still active as a surveyor in his eighties, articulately described his boyhood experiences at the Chunn stand, and has drawn from memory a picture of the building, a duplication of which was afforded by Attorney E. Charles Mashburn of Marshall.

Sally Royce Weir's murder narrative is included in *Hot Springs, Past and Present*, pp. 14-18.

Sale of the Chunn place to Rachel Frisby is included in a typescript collection of copies of documents concerning the extensive Chunn property and its disposal over several decades, generously lent me by E. Charles Mashburn.

A WILD HOG STORY FROM COLUMBUS COUNTY

by Hugh Agee

More than ten years ago Mr. Cager McLamb of Nakina in Columbus County, North Carolina, told me a story about a hog that for years ran wild in that community. This story stuck in my mind partly because of its unusual nature and partly because the details of the hog's death reminded me of the fate of William Faulkner's well-known bear. In April, 1971, I returned to Nakina where Mr. McLamb allowed me to tape his story. The transcript of it is followed by several comments and observations.

"Back—this is way back in—maybe 1912 sometime—there was a wild hog that was in Simmons' bay," said Mr. McLamb, "and nobody couldn't kill him. They tried to trap him, but couldn't trap him. He was old, he was tough, he'd tear outen their traps. Deer dogs—men would go in there deer driving, and if they run onto this wild hog in there, they'd kill—maybe it'd kill their dogs and have to tote them out and sew'em up. That hog stayed in there fer years and years. Nobody couldn't kill him. Finally, some hunters run onto him one day. A feller Faulk, he walked a log over where he was and shot him. He was yet fighting at the dogs, and as he made a lunge at the dogs he tripped hisself and fell with his tush against a tree; but he was so mean when he—he faught so much—I reckon to save his life, when he got his tush in the tree he held it right there. This feller Faulk had a big knife—he couldn't shoot him and kill him, so he takes that big knife and he eases down there between them trees and stuck him. He bled—he bled him to death. They took that hog and they skint him, and they said his hide was so thick it'd stand up just like the hog was in his hide right on after they skint it. Some of 'em fetched some of his ham—maybe a ham out, but they couldn't eat it. It was no good. He was too old, and then male meat is not good anyhow, you see. That's the reason people castrates 'em and such like that so the meat will be good. They couldn't eat that hog, and some of 'em said

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** *The author is associate professor of English Education at the University of Georgia in Athens.*

they'd seen him in there for over fifteen years before them boys killed him on that day.

"Now who were the hunters? There was Faulk, and who else?"

"There was a feller Cleve Faulk, Dan Canady, and Will Watts which was the hunters on that day that run onto—the dogs run onto the hog. They was in there hunting, and the dogs run onto this hog, and when they bayed him they went on logs. There's juniper timber in this bay and it just falls, you see, and moss and trees—well, he had him a house back up in there where he stayed through the winter. And this feller Faulk, he walked one of these logs in there right over him and shot him and never put a shot in him. They shot him with slugs of lead . . . ."

From the above narrative we realize that this was no ordinary animal, as the toughness of its hide and its apparent longevity suggest. Moreover, like Faulkner's bear, it was not brought to an end by trap or shot but by a knife—and that only as a result of its being trapped in a tree. The latter, in fact, seems a likely variant of the traditional folk type, Claw in Split Tree (Aarne-Thompson Type 38). Faulkner's fictional encounter, however, is heightened by Lion, himself no ordinary dog.

Several recognizable motifs further enhance the folk qualities of this tale. As cited in the Stith Thompson *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature*, these are: Giant devastating boar (B16.1.4.1), Animal's strong teeth (B747), and Magic unpierceable skin protects against attack (D1381.3.2).

Mr. McLamb recently celebrated his eighty-first birthday. Since he neither reads nor writes, he is an excellent example of an informant for whom the spoken word is primary. At the same time, one wonders how much modification of the basic facts has occurred in this story over the years, particularly since the story came to him secondhand. I have not found others who tell of this event so that I might compare variants, but I did discover that of the three men named in the story, one, Mr. Cleve Faulk, was still alive.

In August I went to see Mr. Faulk and asked about this wild hog incident. He could recall many hunting situations in his lifetime, but he could not recall killing a wild boar with a knife. Mr. Faulk is in his late seventies. Neither he nor Mr. McLamb is in the best of health, but the question of which man's memory is faulty seems at this point an academic one. More to the point is that here is a good yarn, unusual enough to have been remembered and recounted for close to fifty years. As Faulkner's bear story is likely based on local lore, so may we see in Mr. McLamb's wild hog story the stuff from which good fiction comes.

Brown-Hudson Awards

At the annual meeting of the North Carolina Folklore Society last December, three distinguished folklorists were presented Brown-Hudson Folklore Awards. Here are the citations:

PAUL GREEN, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, was born on a farm about five miles from Lillington on March 17, 1894. He was graduated from Buie's Creek Academy in 1914 and taught school for two years before entering the University of North Carolina. He served in the Army for two years, then returned to the University, where he studied philosophy and playwriting. In 1927, his play *In Abraham's Bosom* won the Pulitzer Prize. From 1932 to 1935 he was in Hollywood where he wrote some twenty-five to thirty movies. He turned down an offer of $100,000 to stay in Hollywood in order to return to his native state. And from 1935 to 1940 he taught graduate courses in drama at the University. He is an internationally known writer, researcher, collector, and philosopher. He is the author of numerous plays, such as *The Lost Colony, The Common Glory, The Founders, The Highland Call, Johnny Johnson*, and others. Along with his wife, he is one of the chief contributors to the *Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore.* His *Words and Ways: Stories and Incidents from My Cape Fear Valley Folklore Collection* was published in December, 1968, as a special issue of *North Carolina Folklore.*

LUCY CALISTA MORGAN, Director of the Penland School of Handicrafts, was born in Franklin, North Carolina, on September 20, 1889. She received her formal education at Central Michigan College of Education and at Berea College and the University of Chicago. She has long been recognized nationally and internationally as one of the most outstanding and influential leaders of handicrafts instruction this nation ever produced. For her work in this field she has been awarded honorary doctorates by her alma mater, Central Michigan College of Education, and by the University of North Carolina. As a teacher in 1920 at the Appalachian School at Penland in Mitchell County, she recognized the desperate need of her mountain neighbors

for increased income, and began to revive some of the old-time handicraft skills which had almost disappeared. As response to her efforts grew, her interest intensified and she promoted the establishment of the cooperative Penland Weavers and Potters Association. Out of this nucleus of interest the Penland School of Handicrafts was founded in 1929, and by extension, the Southern Highlands Handicrafts Guild. From its early concentration on weaving, the school has grown to such proportions that now some sixty major and minor crafts are taught there. Her dedicated and lively leadership created such a glow that the school became a beacon which attracted the enrollment of students and the support of friends from all fifty states of the United States and from forty foreign countries. Her book *Gift from the Hills*, written in collaboration with LeGette Blythe, beautifully sets forth her life's work at Penland, a work which started with a dream and has climaxed in the largest school of its kind in the world.

GEORGE P. WILSON, Professor Emeritus of English at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, was born in Clarksville, Virginia, on April 3, 1888. He received an A.B. in English from the University of North Carolina in 1913, and an M.A. from Columbia University in 1919. From 1924 to 1927 he was head of the Department of English at Guilford College. He was associate professor of English at UNC-Greensboro from 1927 to 1938, and professor of English there from 1938 until he retired in 1956. He is best known as a dialectician, and is distinguished as a teacher and researcher in folklore. He is the author of books on speech and grammar and joint author of *Down in the Holler: A Gallery of Ozark Speech*. For several years he was President of the North Carolina Folklore Society. He has been a frequent contributor of articles to *North Carolina Folklore*, and was associate editor and contributor to the *Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore*. *Grave Humor* (1961) is his delightful collection of epitaphs, gathered over a lifetime of searching.

(Professor Wilson was unable to be present at the time the Brown-Hudson Award was made to him, because of illness. He died in Greensboro on February 28, 1972, at the age of eighty-three.)

THREE GHOST TALES FROM KENTUCKY

collected by Lee and Joy Pennington

In 1965 when we started teaching at Southeast Community College in Cumberland, Kentucky, right in the middle of Harlan County, one of the things which interested my wife and me was the folklore of the region. Long before we moved to the county, we had heard of it and its legendary nature. Bloody Harlan is perhaps as well known as any other spot in Kentucky. The union wars in the coal fields dating thirty or so years back literally bathed the mountains in blood and left a name like a dagger sticking in a wall.

We had, then, heard of the county long before it ever heard of us, and we were especially interested in the area because of its peculiar background and because it was, for the most part, a rural area, one still very much isolated from the rest of the world. The distance into Harlan County is short, but the drive is long and hard because the narrow roads are filled with treacherous curves, and heavy loaded coal trucks have left the roads in a ruinous condition. For this reason, people inside seldom come out and people outside seldom go in. Within this framework we wanted to know what kind of tales remained alive.

Our first attempt at discovering the tales was in the classroom. Joy was teaching speech and her first speech assignment was simply: "Tell a folktale." Lee sent a composition class in search of yarns. Both of us attempted to get students to tell tales they had heard from a friend or relative. We wanted to know what was still being told in Harlan County, and what, if any, new tales existed.

Every tale in our unpublished manuscript BLOODY BONES AND BLOODY HARLAN came from the search in the classroom. Some you will recognize as having heard or read before; some will be new. The

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** *Lee Pennington is a guitarist, a folk singer, and a poet who is active in the Kentucky State Poetry Society. He has written a book on Jesse Stuart. He and his wife Joy, both teachers, live at Middletown, near Louisville.*

student who told the tale is listed at the bottom of each one. We cannot help wondering how many more tales would show up if teachers across the country, in big cities and in backwoods, would make just one assignment related to one of man's oldest pastimes, storytelling. We feel that English teachers, and especially those working in literature, ought to be more concerned with the oral tradition, for it is the very basis for all the stories we have written down. Perhaps our students would better understand literature if they could first see the relationship between the oral and the written, the foundation and the house. Students are already familiar with the foundation, but they are often asked to build a house without using that foundation,

GHOST RIDER. This story originated here in Kentucky. It comes from McCreary and Whitley counties. One tale of a woman who was in a car wreck many years ago is still in existence and many people claim this tale is true, that they've experienced what goes on. The woman had been in a wreck and they had tried to find her after the wreck had occurred and they couldn't. Her body was never found, and so many nights out of the year people will travel this section from McCreary County on the roads down around Cumberland Falls and places like that, and the woman will get in the car with them. They won't have to stop for her; they'll just glance around and she'll be in their back seat. She'll travel about four miles with them and then disappear. And no one had been able to talk to her or find out why she is there or what happens to her afterwards. She is just there and gone. (Katie Vanover)

THE BIG TOE. Once upon a time there was an old lady digging potatoes in the garden and she dug and dug and she got enough potatoes to fix for supper. She fixed her supper and when she started fixing her potatoes she found a chunk of meat, so she decided she'd just fix it in her potatoes that night for supper, so they ate their potatoes and meat and went on about their business. But that night when they were all in bed asleep, something said, "I want my big toe, I want my big toe." The old man said, "Well, get up, little boy, get up and go see what that is making all that noise." So the little boy got up and he walked all around the house, looked under all the beds and under all the chairs and he couldn't find a thing, so he went back to bed and no sooner had he gotten back in bed than it started again. "I want my big toe, I want my big toe." So the old man said, "All right, little girl, you get up and find out what it is." So the little girl got up and she looked all around the house and she couldn't find a thing and she looked under the chairs and she looked under the beds, but she couldn't find anything that would make that noise, so

she went back to bed. But no sooner had she gotten back in bed than something started again, "I want my big toe, I want my big toe." The old man was getting pretty tired of it by this time, so he said, "All right, old lady, you get up and find out what that is." So she got up and went all around the house and she looked and she looked and she said, "Well, I just know it has something to do with me putting that chunk of meat in my potatoes. She sat down at the kitchen table and she began to wonder and wonder, and, sure enough, while she was sitting there, something said, "I want my big toe, I want my big toe." It must have come from the chimney. So she looked under the chimney and she saw a big haunt. She looked at it and she said, "My, what big eyes you have." "The better to see you with." "My, what big ears you have." "The better to hear you with." "My, what a big nose you have." "The better to smell you with." "My, what a big tail you have." "The better to sweep your grave with." "My, what big teeth you have." "THE BETTER TO EAT YOU UP WITH!" (Jeanette Dixon)

JACK AND THE GHOST. One night Jack had been courting and he had a long ride home on a lonely deserted road with only his horse Old Red for company. Well, he was just riding along and he decided it was about time he stopped for a rest at the water hole. Being afraid had never entered his mind. Well, now normally Old Red wouldn't carry two people; he'd rear and rant until he'd thrown whoever was on him off. Well, he's sitting there at the water hole and he feels somebody get up on the horse behind him, so he says right slow like, "You better get off. Old Red won't carry double." But nobody answered him, so he reached behind him to feel around and see who's back there, but he couldn't feel anything but air, just like nobody was there. But somebody was sure holding on to his waist to keep from falling off. So he starts mosing on down the road. But then again he says, "Now I'm telling you, you better get off. Old Red won't carry double, and we're both gonna get hurt." Well, no one answered him. On the way home, he had to pass this old graveyard in which his brother was buried. His brother had been killed on a horse that looked a lot like Old Red. Anyway, he was going on down the road and right as he passed the graveyard where his brother was buried, whatever it was on the horse dropped off. Now the man that this happened to is still alive and he's getting close to ninety years old, and his memory isn't very good. But if you go and see him and ask him, he'll tell you this story and swear it's the truth. (Mary Lynn Craiger)

"AND SPEAKING OF THE TANIWHA . . ."

by Campbell Reeves
Raleigh

The Taniwha
what did he look like
white people said
nonsense fables superstition

laughed at the Taniwha

I wasn't sure ever

Was he a crocodile
standing up
a dragon with wetted down feathers

or a huge grey mouse
rampant insatiable

Rubbish said
Uncle Henry Ha Ha said
my father who
should have known better

Oh dear said
my mother who
has been telling you such tales

But Lizzie
with the tattoed cheeks and
pipe who was the granddaughter
of a Polynesian king and
came at shearing time
to roll my father's fleeces

She said there was
A Taniwha
she had seen him and not so long ago
and to beware of the
Taniwha
at all times

They cross oceans

THE OLD MUSKET: A FAMILY STORY

by John Foster West

Families long established in one area build up over the years a family folklore just as the inhabitants of an entire region do. A good example of this fact is my own West family folklore.

My greatgrandfather John Baylus West was among the first settlers of Lewis Fork Township in the foothills of Wilkes County. He was a resident twenty-two years of age when the 1820 U.S. census was taken. Married to Mary (probably nee Witherspoon), age twenty, he was in that year without children. During the next three decades he accumulated a considable amount of land, which he farmed with his three sons and two daughters. My grandfather, John Witherspoon West, born in 1840, was the youngest of the boys.

By the time the Civil War came along, his two oldest sons had married, both to a Nancy—but the wife of the eldest, William, became the beloved Aunt Nancy of family tradition. So that William West could leave his family and fight in the war, Grandfather went to live with Aunt Nancy. He was unable to bear arms himself because of a paralyzed right hand. Many stories have come down to us concerning Aunt Nancy, such as her seeing a baby angel behind a boxwood bush in her back yard the same night her husband died at Petersburg. But the most interesting tale is about her and the old family musket.

Today, leaning in the corner beside my stone fireplace is an antebellum, muzzle-loading shotgun. The stock is faded, the barrel is rusty, and the firing mechanism no longer works. The wood stock extends almost to the muzzle of the barrel, brass bands holding the barrel to the stock. The gun is so heavy it takes a strong man to aim it. The stock has two sets of initials carved on it in crude letters (IRA and WHA) and what looks like the Greek letter Omega.

My father, John Wilson West, was born in 1867, and grew up during the Reconstruction period in the same township his grandfather had settled. By the time I was a child, in the 1930s, his mind was still

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** *The author is president of the North Carolina Folklore Society.*

fresh with tales of deserters, outlaws, and murderers during the war and postwar era.

Daddy used to shoot the old musket every Christmas, to make the loudest noise in the community. He loaded the barrel with powder, tamped a wad of paper on top of it, cocked the giant iron hammer, and slipped a cap over the firing tube. Then he would hold the gun out in front of himself (or rest the barrel in the fork of a small cherry tree) and pull the trigger with his thumb. There would come a great blaze of flame, a roar, and the huge gun would kick backwards, almost tearing itself from my father's grasp.

There had been a time, however, when the musket was the only gun Daddy owned. With it he had shot H.E.'s stray bull with a roll of raw pigskin and sent him on a bellowing gallop down Bull's Branch. It had been his only protection the time he had taken a terrified young wife back to her parents to escape a cruel husband, who later tried to stab Daddy in the back on his way to Dunkirk Church.

All through our childhood, my brothers and sisters and I had been aware of a man's death related to the old musket. When other children would spend the night with us, we would tell them that at midnight a blue flame would flicker along the barrel. It was none other than the ghost of a man killed with it. The story I had heard as a child was the one related in my novel *Time Was*.

There had been a search party in our township hunting for the notorious outlaw Ligh Church, so the story went. A man in the party carrying the musket shot another man some distance away, thinking he was Church. It turned out to be a man named Minton, a member of the posse. Aunt Nancy sat with the man's head on her lap until he had bled to death. That used to be the only story I knew about death and the old gun.

Recently, I was talking with my youngest half brother, Millard West, and the musket was mentioned. (Millard had heard grandfather tell stories, before his death in 1914.) "You know where that old musket came from, don't you?" he said.

I had to admit I did not know, and he told me: During the war (he meant the Civil War), he related, a good many deserters were hiding out in the hills around the old West homeplace. Sometimes Confederate troops would come looking for them. They would capture the deserters or shoot them, whichever was easiest.

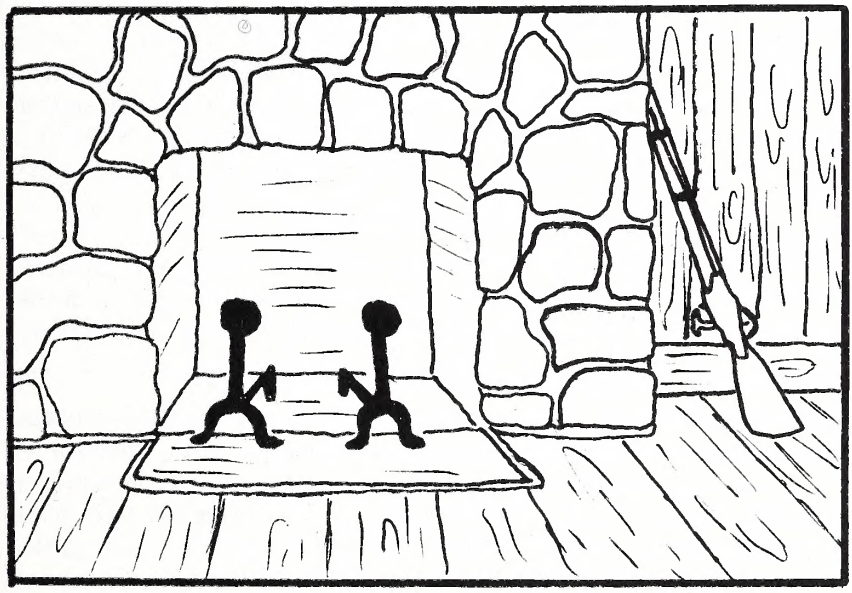
One of these deserters was hiding out in the woods close to where the old Stony Fork Road crossed the Ridge Road, above Aunt Nancy's home. Three or four soldiers came looking for him. One day they flushed him out of the woods, and just as he was crossing the Stony Fork Road, one of them shot him. He fell beside the road and lay still. The soldiers walked up to him, looked at him, and then walked

away, leaving him there apparently dead.

But he was not dead, my half brother continued. Nobody in the community would take the wounded man into their homes. Everybody was afraid his home would be burned or the soldiers would come back and arrest all of them. But this did not stop Aunt Nancy. She and Grandpa (John Witherspoon West) got one of the bedticks off a bed at her house, took it up to where the wounded man lay, and put him on it beside the road.

"He lived about two weeks," Millard told me. "Aunt Nancy took care of him the best she could, feeding him as long as he would eat and keeping him warm. He had the old musket with him, and Grandpa got it after he died. Grandpa passed it on to Daddy, and now you have it. I don't reckon they ever found out the deserter's name. He was from the low country somewhere. When he died, they buried him, some say, in the woods near where he was shot. Some say he was buried in the old Dave Huffman family graveyard, where Grandpa was later buried. It was just a cowpasture the last time I noticed it."

And that is the folklore of the old musket, which I still own. There used to be a *haint* in the woods where the old Stony Fork Road crossed the Ridge Road, near our house. We children never knew why the place was supposed to be haunted. But it was surely the ghost of that unfortunate deserter looking for his benefactor, Aunt Nancy West, who rests about a mile to the east, in the Mount Pleasant cemetery.



WHENCE THE NAME DULA? ONE PLAUSIBILITY

by J. S. Winkler

My great-grandmother Robbins I never saw, but to judge from my mother's remembrances of her, she was not one to suffer fools or loudmouths any too gladly. She had been born a Dula and, as my mother tells it, would slip into a paroxysm of rage at the merest drop of the name Ann Melton. Which has to do with the Tom Dula business. Quite frankly, I was blithely unaware of cousin Tom and his notoriety until the Kingston Trio disinterred and exhibited him internationally in the fifties. Since then I have come to prefer, if I must listen to a Tom Dula song, the version by Doc Watson—and not just because the Tripletts in Doc's lineage suggest that he and I may be at least as close kin as old Tom and I.

The name Dula figured prominently in the Caldwell County of my growing up. It was shared by rich and poor, black and white—which may or may not hint at sizable slave holdings once upon a time. It was very commonly pronounced *Dooley*, but I do not recall ever seeing it spelled other than with the *u* and the *a*. Since I had no known close kinsmen by that name, my interest in its origin and history was nil. I do rather think I had noticed that it was a fairly restricted sort of name, one that seemed not to be encountered outside of North Carolina.

Marburg, West Germany, is a city of 50,000 situated on the Lahn River (which is no bigger but more polluted than the Yadkin at Ferguson). Marburg boasts the oldest Protestant university in the world and was the scene in 1529 of the famous disputation between Luther and Zwingli. On one of its ancient cobblestone streets in the "upper city" is an excellent shop handling hunting and fishing

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** *Native of Lenoir, with degrees from Ohio Wesleyan and Princeton, the author is Associate Professor and Chairman of the Department of German at Davidson College. Some years back he was a Fulbright Fellow to Germany. His discoveries on the name Dula serve as footnote to John Foster West's* The Ballad of Tom Dula *(1971), dealing with the most famous of the North Carolina Dulas.*

equipment, fine glassware and cutlery of every description. The name above the door is F.Dula. Under the circumstances, an interest piquer.

Sometime in late 1969, on a day when business was less brisk than usual on my visits to the shop, I asked the obvious boss if his name were in fact Dula and whether that was a widespread name in Europe. "Yes, indeed," he replied to the first question and "no, indeed," to the second. Everyone running around with that name was kin to everyone else, he said. Upon my telling him of the prolific western North Carolina Dulas, he immediately summoned his octogenarian Uncle Hans, still active as a salesman in the shop. Neither of them knew of any relative of theirs who had emigrated to the United States, but they readily conceded that their family records were far from complete. In the course of numerous conversations with Hans Friedrich Dula, the owner of the shop—the F.Dula above the door had been Fritz Dula, his grandfather—I learned facts about the origin of the family and the name which I am certain Herr Dula would like to share with anyone interested.

At the earliest traceable time, according to Herr Dula, the family was resident in what is now Chateau d'Oex, at the base of the Col des Mosses, near Lake Geneva in Switzerland. The family name in those days, in that place, was *Toullaie*. It is recorded that in the year 1573 a Ludwig *Dula* emigrated from there to Lucerne, being followed at somewhat later dates by other *Dulas*, apparently all from a single family line. In the course of ensuing centuries, the number of Dulas has remained fairly small, but certain of them have done well enough in life to earn the plaudits of the government: in 1936, for example, the Dr. Franz Dula School was dedicated in Lucerne.

But a listing of worthy bearers of the name is of less interest here than the phenomenon of *Toullaie* becoming *Dula*. *Toullaie* I assume to be of Romance derivation, although it bears no very close resemblance to any modern French word I can turn up. I further assume that it signified in the original dialect what its Germanicized, or rather Latinized, counterpart signifies. Reference here is to the daw, more commonly jackdaw, a ravenlike bird which is the heraldic animal of the Dula coat of arms. The modern German word for jackdaw is *Dohle*. It is a word with a wildly checkered etymology, but without any form similar to *toullaie*. *Dula* itself is simply the last two syllables of the Latin designation of the jackdaw, *corvus monedula*. This leaning on Latin does not strike me, for whatever my opinion is worth, as being a typical effort to give the name a touch of class, as when many a Herr Schneider had himself rechristened Sartorius.

The Swiss (and German) Dulas know the provenance of their family and of their name, which has remained constant for four hundred years. Are they the ancestors and distant relatives of the

western North Carolina Dulas, or are the latter from somewhere else entirely and the name a mere coincidence? A quick check of Davidson College's library holdings—several books on Irish, English and other British proper names—revealed not a single instance of the name Dula. Neither, for that matter, did a five-volume work on Germanic family names, which left me with a statistic I scarcely knew what to do with.

Obviously there are too many indeterminables to permit a full and satisfactory answer to the question. In Marburg, when the younger son of Hans Friedrich Dula learned that the Kingston Trio had been singing about a potential American outlaw cousin (he had naturally made no connection between *Dooley* and his own name), now, there was enthusiasm for establishing a connection. The Marburg Dulas, let me say in fine, were without exception handsome, gracious and hospitable—all one could wish for in relatives here or abroad.

THE QUILT

by Elaine Johnson
Cambridge, England

Aunt Edith's patchwork:
Hallum history.
Scrap of Uncle Benny's jeans.
He made white lightning and traveled
by freight.
Red satin from Sally's party dress.
Pretty Sally, early a mother but never
a husband to prove it.
White silk from Grandma's
wedding train.
In the center, an old striped tie of Jethro
Hallum's; he founded our fortunes
with Hallum's Seed at South and Vine.
They say he played a gentle harmonica.
I like to think he fell asleep to the tune
of dreams.
A man needs visions.

THANK YOU KINDLY, BUT WITH RESERVATIONS

by Kathleen Morehouse

urprising and gratifying it was to discover in the March 1971 *North Carolina Folklore* how extensively John Foster West, modern writer-in-residence at Boone, had studied my thirty-five-year-old regional novel *Rain on the Just.*

Instead of remaining sensibly silent as I did in 1936, in 1971 I am sincerely thanking the editors who published Mr. West's textual criticism. I am also grateful for the editorial generosity which permits me to acknowledge in *North Carolina Folklore* my indebtedness to Mr. West for his painstaking analysis of *Rain on the Just.* The last twenty-one words of his real effort (he counted words, too) were extremely gracious, indeed so "well come" (*vide* Skeat's *Concise Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*) I should probably refrain from offering anything but appreciation, and omit any excuses for the Morehouse errors, West-enumerated, and amiably termed *minor.*

Yet major work was done to locate these errors, and the pains taken to understand, and to interpret the tale-telling of a young "furriner," merit sympathy and honorable mention. However, because I gather *North Carolina Folklore* is widely circulated, it seems reasonable to remind its writers who include Mr. West, and now me—to remind its readers who include Mr. West, and now me—that there are usually at least two points of view, and that references in a scholarly article should always be verified.

Although this particular scholarly article ("Mrs. Morehouse's *Rain on the Just*" in *North Carolina Folklore*) was not officially brought to my attention, in fact was made known to me quite by chance, I have read it attentively, and somehow I feel obligated to verify certain references, and to correct some of the errors while Time Is, and knowledge remains.

Only because too much Time Was since I happened on the

** *The author, whose fondly remembered novel* Rain on the Just *was published in 1936, is a Brushy Mountain writer.*

provocative West excerpt in the North Wilkesboro *Journal-Patriot* of Monday, April 5, 1971, and finally located and read that excerpt in its complete context, I have made no attempt to consult with Mr. West as to errors, some of them, it seems to me, *his* errors piled on top of the (unverified) Morehouse "minor errors."

Mr. West's errors, too, are mostly minor, but since he chose to enumerate what he considered my mistakes, I choose to list some of his, in order to remind students of Mr. West's criticism that reading requires skill, is perhaps indeed a fine art.

As some of Mr. West's errors previously referred to as piled on top of (unverified) errors are possibly just careless proof-reading after carefree skim reading, I use as opening examples two small typos in Mr. West's introductory paragraph. First, Yankee was small-*y*-ed. In all dictionaries available to me, Yankee gets an upper case *Y*, and usage and courtesy should assure it in *North Carolina Folklore*. The little (lower case) *y* looked as sadly drooping as the fine Leonidas Betts initial *M* was flourishing! (Behind that hearty *M* did my magnifying glass discover on the tree-shaded tombstone Kat– and N.W.?) The second typo, only three lines farther, was amusing. "Mrs. Morehouse was attached from all sides." There is a difference between *attach* and *attack*.

In Mr. West's 26th paragraph, page 52, of the March *Folklore*, he quoted as Morehouse error "a mountain man had to have a good cause for *loafering*, instead of loading (sic)." I suppose Mr. West wanted loafing, but he should have quoted my *Rain on the Just* page 39 sentence accurately: "A mountaineer needs show good cause for loafering." I intended loafering. I have frequently so heard it.

These are small matters, but there are too many of them, and some misrepresent the original text strangely. And lest I dwell with too much satisfaction on Mr. West's summing-up, those gracious twenty-one words, I must remember, as historians know, that a source inaccurate in small things can be unreliable in larger ones.

And *fernling* was Mr. West's, or the proof-reader's version of my *fernlin'*. I have a tender feeling for the apostrophe, and I do not abandon terminal *g*'s without thought.

Let me digress here, for students of speech, to mention my lasting regret for the absence of an apostrophe in the word *Mistress*, page 171 of *Rain on the Just*. The pronunciation is *Mis'ress*, with the s's not sibilant, but rather *z*'d. *Miz'riz* I still hear.

And I also regret two errors on page 56 of *Rain on the Just* which I ascribe to proof-reading while I was convalescing from old-style (pre-antibiotics) pneumonia.

The puzzling word (still 26th paragraph, page 52, of *Folklore*) which is printed in Mr. West's article *fernist* should have been and is,

in *Rain on the Just, ferninst,* so pronounced. Had Mr. West read with more attention, he might then have located word and meaning with the aid of a reputable dictionary.

Some of my other phonetic spellings of neighborhood talk are *beazlings* (*vide* beestings or biestings, *Webster's Unabridged* or *Shorter Oxford*), *fleak* for *flake, widdies* for *weensie biddies*, and *sot* and *snickety* for *set* and *persnickety.*(And what if I had used *c'yarny* and *quile*, which I still admire in the Brushy Mountain vernacular?) Some of my spellings are almost as illiterate, if not as vivid, as Mr. West's *simmerns, scart, clammering, closter, tard,* all of which I noted in Dr. Abrams on West, pages 44 and 45, March *Folklore*. Perhaps simple typos are responsible for some of these.

But Mr. West's close attention to words (a pastime of mine, too) should have given him (paragraph 27, page 52, *Folklore*) my original words *lip-smacking portion*, not his *lip-smackin potion*; in paragraph 28, page 52, *Folklore*, the word *starveling* not his *starvling*, and, of course (*Drake's Drum*, anyone?) *ware and waking*, not Mr. West's *ware and walking.*

I should also like to say that the verbs to which Mr. West took exception—*threat, lay about, swig, pleasure, raise*, and *rift*—are entirely respectable, visible as such in reputable dictionaries. They were used locally as I used them.

Words, beautiful words. *Intoxicated, propositioned, depleted* as used by Mr. West in his descriptions of my Brushy Mountain descriptions of morals and manners did not ring true, were not *mots justes* in their setting to *this* reader. Why not *drunk, chased after, done*?

And this interested reader wonders why, when Mr. West quoted "only one example of folk humor," he failed to quote accurately, completely, omitting the decent word *gentlemen*. And why—his paragraph 32, page 53 *Folklore*—he decided four preachers simultaneously served the same church. Famous men, gone to their fathers, are still praised by as many good speakers as the bereaved care to invite, and can persuade to attend the funeral service.

I am also being a little picayunish in regard to paragraph 33, page 53 in the West work. It is certainly not a so-called transitional paragraph, and the definition of a *froe* (Mr. West's acceptable spelling) seems included just to object to my spelling *frow*, which is also acceptable orthography.

Now all at once to that excerpt from Mr. West's "Mrs. Morehouse's *Rain on the Just*"—with a rush and a roar to Mr. West's concluding paragraph, concluding with twenty-one still appreciated words, but beginning with the sentences which stimulated the composition of these pages: "Occasionally the author of *Rain on the Just* seems confused in her geography. Once she has clouds flying north toward

the Blue Ridge, which lies due west of the Brushy Mountains, and parallel to them."

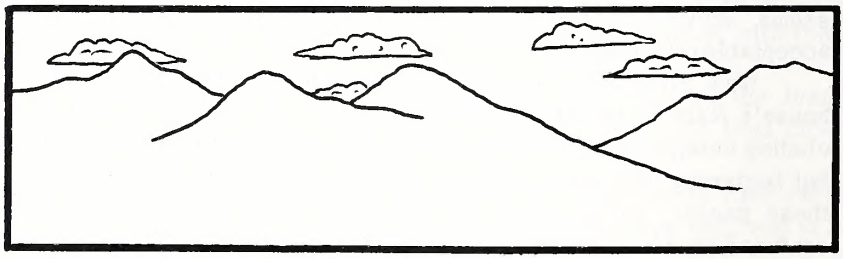
If Mr. West had been more alert, and less kindly, he could have complained about Hanging Dog Creek, over Murphy way; about Long Hope, not in the Brushies, but near Creston. They were names which pleased me, and I borrowed them. I also, if I recall, invented Squealing Branch, and Squealing Creek, Crying Creek, Potato Creek Church, and Wildcat Mountain.

But for the sake of the Brushy Mountains and the Blue Ridge, I must object almost strenuously to Mr. West's confusion about my geographical confusion. It may be that from Mr. West's Bull's Branch, which my maps do not identify, the Blue Ridge lies due west of the Brushies and parallel to them.

The Blue Ridge are certainly west of this Brushy north slope where I placed "Allen Ridge." *BUT*, and this is a *big* **BUT**, and I am looking north with a compass, and I am looking at a relief map (Winston-Salem legend) with the inscription "Refer corrections to Commanding Officer, Army Map Service, Washington, D. C." BUT the Brushies, foothills south of the Yadkin River, stretching from approximately Elkin to Lenoir, face a fine set of Blue Ridges *north across the valley*.

I am indeed confused about much in this confusing universe, but after living on a north slope of the Brushies, facing Mt. Jefferson, and Virginia's Mt. Rogers fornent/fornenst, with Sparta north, with Stone Mountain and Wolf Rock east of north, living here myself for the last forty-two years, with annual visits for the preceding four years, acquainted three years before that with local color stories given me by the Morehouse family who moved here fifty-eight years ago, I think I know, if I dare be sure of anything, that the Blue Ridge is still as it was and as it may be *saecula saeculorum* gloriously BLUE-north, TRUE-north of the Brushies. NORTH. North.

And let me be the first to insist this *is* a teapot tempest, but could Mr. West's surname have influenced *his* geographical confusion? (And I "twinkle," or would Mr. West prefer just a wink?)



New Books

OUTER BANKS STORIES. In 1966, Judge Charles Harry Whedbee of Greenville published *Legends of the Outer Banks and Tar Heel Tidewater*, containing eighteen yarns about North Carolina's coastal region. They were somewhat concentrated on the northeast around Nags Head. The book had a tremendous sale. *The Flaming Ship of Ocracoke and Other Tales of the Outer Banks* (John F. Blair, 404 NCNB Building, Winston-Salem 27101, 153 pp., $4.95), published last July, adds eleven more stories, some familiar and others new (at least to us). Details about the burning ship of the Palatines differ from previous versions, but it's a good story in whatever way it's written. Judge Whedbee has a full and delightful account of those lady pirates Anne Bonny and Mary Read. He tells about the notorious Lost Colony stones supposed to be messages from Eleanor Dare and others, but does not (perhaps in the interest of folklore) reveal how phony they proved to be. His account of the *Crissie Wright* shipwreck off Cape Lookout in 1886 is more factual than legendary. "White Stallion" is a rambling yarn of the "mustees" (half-breeds) of Currituck Banks. "Sea-born Woman," about the housekeeper of a wealthy ex-pirate at Portsmouth, strains hard to be a tale rather than a biography. The two Nags Head pieces come off best. "Pin Hill" accounts for the name of a dune which constantly pours forth straight pins because of a pact between Neptune and a peddler, and "Freshpond Will" tells how a clever fellow got the better of the satanic one at Kill Devil Hill (we'd never heard this folk story before). Three others—a tragic duel in Beaufort, a fey woman at Diamond City ("Porpoise Sal"), and the mockery of the Last Supper in Wilmington on Maundy Thursday in 1810 by a group of profane young men—round out the collection.

FOLKLORE FROM THE BARD OF OXFORD. No matter what Thad Stem, Jr., writes—and he writes a lot—there is always a generous underlayer of folklore. (See *NCF*, May 1969, for comments on the folkloric aspects of his books, both poetry and prose.) His recently published *Entries from Oxford* (Moore Publishing Company, Box 3143, Durham 27705, 334 pp., $5.95) might be defined as the "profane history" of the North Carolina courthouse town where Stem was born and brought up, but a reader soon realizes that *Entries* is not so much

"history" as lore and imagination. Certainly nobody's leg is being pulled after meeting up with characters named Zip Coon and Old Dan Tucker.

Like any folklorist, Stem, who incidentally is first vice president of the North Carolina Folklore Society, is not unwilling to repeat tales and embellish them. There is Mr. Purvis, whom we've met before. He is the goose-grease salesman with the two ever-present delightful symbolic geese George Greene and Jacob Fuller. In the *Entries* retelling, Mr. Purvis's lovable horse Silas expires, and after three days Mr. Purvis is discovered departed from this life himself. He left a note: "Old Silas is dead and I want to die too. Goodbye, my dear friends." (That some years ago the newspapers carried just such a story of a black man and his mule, and in a different county, is simply neither here nor there.) Some of Mr. Purvis's friends thought that he and Silas ought to be buried in the same grave, but "Brer" Thompson ruled against it.

Besides the Bard of Oxford's numerous yarns and tales, a reader comes across entries on such matters as how to make molasses. "Brer" Stem brings back to our minds those children's games some of us played long ago, like "Ain't No Bugger Bears Out Tonight." Nursery rhymes are recalled: "Gay go up and gay go down / To ring the bells of Oxford town." Oh, there's a glorious plenty to recondition your spirits in *Entries from Oxford.*

GHOSTS AND WITCHES. Mrs. Louise Robertson Booker of Williamston is a storyteller and folklorist whose *Historical and Traditional 'Tar Heel' Stories from the Colorful Central Plains* (1968) recorded many old yarns from her section of North Carolina. Now she has brought out *Ghosts and Witches of Martin County* (Enterprise Publishing Company, Williamston, 42 pp.), copiously illustrated with thirty-eight drawings by seven different artists. For most of her stories, she has relied on hundred-year-old books, unpublished papers by a WPA writer in the 1930s, and various Martin County narrators. One would not think there could be so many mysterious goings-on in one North Carolina county, but here is proof. Among the thirty-four selections are "Ghost of Sweeten Water Creek," "The 18th Century Haunted Hotel," "Weird Lights near The Hanging Tree," and "Witches' Brew."

EVERYTHING ABOUT FOLKLORE YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW. If you can't scrape up $95 for the seven-volume *Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore* published by the Duke University Press—which of course is the most desirable item for any Tar Heel folklorist's bookshelf—you might think of buying Duncan

Emrich's *Folklore on the American Land* (Little, Brown & Company, Boston, 1972, 707 pp., $15), handsome and big, with glorious photographs from the 1930s and 1940s, and with rather full coverage of the American scene. "Scholarly, yet nontechnical," says the dust jacket. And what do we get for our $15? Folk language, proverbs, American names (including "Hound Dog Names"), riddles, nonsense spellings, autograph album rhymes, games, epitaphs, legends and tales, urban belief tales (especially good), Gullah tales, *Cante-Fables*, folksongs and ballads, folk medicine, weatherlore, and so on and so on. If you're not interested in "cattle brands" (which we didn't happen to be), you'll treasure the Jack Tales, if for no other reason than they're all from North Carolina. Another North Carolina contribution is the "Frankie Silvers" murder ballad. Among the entries on North Carolina folk speech—as "Gathered by Joseph D. Clark, George P. Wilson, and Leonidas Betts"—was one comment which pleased us tremendously. Duncan Emrich cited "To fling a Joe Blizzard fit," then appended these three sentences: "Joe Blizzard lived in Kipling, North Carolina, and was known for his violent temper. The saying, until collected by Betts in *North Carolina Folklore*, November, 1966, p. 38 , had been a purely local one. It deserves national adoption." We think so too, Mr. Emrich, and we hope our readers will get your book and enjoy the other things there.

FROM SOUTH CAROLINA. We're always pleased when another state comes to North Carolina for help. We like to be friendly and useful. And so it was with much pleasure that we picked up *Folk Song in South Carolina* (Tricentennial Booklet Number 9, University of South Carolina Press, Columbia 29208, 112 pp., 1971) and noted that it was by our good friend Charles W. Joyner, associate professor of history at St. Andrews Presbyterian College in Laurinburg. There are notes and words (and sometimes music) on twenty ballads, seventeen religious songs, and eight secular songs. A Murrells Inlet version of "Naomi Wise" dating from 1937 is proof that folklore is contemptuous of state lines. There are other selections familiar to North Carolinians. All in all, we heartily recommend this happy little booklet to Tar Heels as well as South Carolinians.

FOLK LEGEND. One thing made clear at a 1969 conference at UCLA "was the fact that American legend studies are still in their infancy." In *American Folk Legend: A Symposium* (U. of California Press, 1971, 237 pp., $7.50), Wayland D. Hand has gathered together fourteen papers presented at the conference. He concludes that more collections of legends must be made in every part of the country. Also there need to be surveys of the "varied legend genres," and "finding-

lists to reveal the untapped legend sources." Here in North Carolina we suspect that we are further along in this matter than most of the other states. Certainly a large collection of legends could be quickly rounded up from sources readily available. Systemizing the legends is another matter, requiring the attention of a professional folklorist, whose first duty would assuredly be to consume and digest the pages of this *Symposium.*

NORTH CAROLINA PLACE NAMES. When George R. Stewart's *American Place-Names: A Concise and Selective Dictionary for the Continental United States of America* (Oxford University Press, 1970, 550 pp., $12.50) arrived at our desk quite a while back, we started checking out the North Carolina names, and then thought of comparing the information we found with that in William S. Powell's substantial *North Carolina Gazetteer* (UNC Press, 1968, 561 pp., $12.50). Some right interesting things turned up.

Both write that folk etymology is responsible for Kitty Hawk, from Indian *Chickahauk* recorded 1729 probably Algonquian (Stewart), or from *Chickehauk* recorded as early as 1738 (Powell). Similarly, Rockyhock Creek in Chowan County is folk-etymologized from *rakiok* probably Algonquian for "cypress-land" (Stewart), or from *Rakahak* on the Ogilby map of 1671 most likely derived from the Indian village Ricahokene probably meaning "where combs [rakes?] are made" (Powell). Among other folk etymologies both writers agree that, through the process of abbreviation, Swearing Creek in Davidson County was named for the Swearington family, Powell adding that on the Collet map of 1770 it was spelled Swaring. Both also agree that the community of Warne in Clay County was named for the gold-mining Warren family; Powell notes that the name was corrupted to Warne by the Indians, but Stewart says the spelling simply conformed to common speech in the area.

The town of Maxton was once called Shoe Heel because its first settlement was on the banks of Shoe Heel Creek, and thereby lies a tale. Stewart reports that folk etymology probably accounted for Shoe Heel after "an earlier Quahele, probably Indian, but language and meaning uncertain." Powell goes into much greater detail, writing that the town began as Shoe Heel, then became Tilden, and in 1879 was called Quhele "probably from a form of the Gaelic word *Caoile*, 'the narrow part of a stream.'" It changed back "to Shoe Heel in 1881 for the imagined meaning of Quhele; and to Maxton in 1887." Now that's a mixture of folk etymology and capricious alteration for you!

The delightful origins of Faith, Handy, Loafers Glory, Matrimony Creek and Why Not are relatively identical in both books, though Stewart spells the last one Wynot. The latest official North Carolina

State Highway Commission map has it Whynot. We wonder what the postmaster over there says.

At least seven place-names listed by Stewart are not in Powell's extensive volume: Asphalt, Delgado, Legged Lump, Look Shack Hill, Metalia, Pilinterry Creek, and Rubyatt. In the WPA pamphlet *How They Began: The Story of North Carolina County, Town, and Other Place Names* (1941), we located Stewart's sources for Asphalt, Delgado, Metalia, and Rubyatt. We surely hope those other fascinating places—Legged Lump, Look Shack Hill, and Pilinterry Creek—are actually somewhere in North Carolina, and not just in Stewart's imagination. We'd love to live at Legged Lump.

Powell's book is of course a gazetteer concerned primarily with locations and identifications and only incidentally with how places got named what they did, while Stewart's emphasis is on explanations of origins. Alligator River, Bigwitch Gap, Cordova, Ginger Cake Mountain, Sedalia, Truth, and Upton are listed and located by Powell, but we have to go to Stewart for stabs at how they got that way. For example, Alligator River was "at the extreme northern range" of the reptile, while Cordova "was named at the suggestion of a woman in 1879, apparently for no special reason." A touch of feminine psychology there, perhaps?

The fun really comes, though, when Stewart and Powell disagree sharply. To tell the truth, we have such a high regard for William S. Powell's scholarship that we'll have to string along with him for the most part. Stewart depends too much on *How They Began*. Anyway, here are some cross-ups:

Advance was named either for the famous Civil War blockade-runner *Ad-Vance* (Stewart), or for the "progress" the citizens expected the community to make (Powell). The origin of Cashiers is uncertain, but there is speculation concerning "an early Indian trader named Cashiers" (Stewart), or "a horse named Cash which grazed here" or "a hermit named Cashiers who lived here" (Powell). Does Celo honor "John Celo, a hunter" (Stewart) or "nearby Celo Knob" (Powell)? And was Cruso named "by the first postmaster, who had just read *Robinson Crusoe*" (Stewart), or labeled "by outsiders because of its isolation" (Powell)? Does Liberty commemorate "an incident of the Civil War" (Stewart) or preserve the name of the "nearby plantation of John Leak who settled here in 1807" (Powell)? And was Louisburg in Franklin County "named in 1764 in commemoration of the capture, largely by American forces, of the French fortress of that name in Nova Scotia" (Stewart), or was it named for the "French King, Louis XVI, to whose court Benjamin Franklin (for whom the county was named) was then American representative" (Powell)?

There are other contradictions. Take Maco, scene of the famous

Maco Light. Does it designate "a kind of cotton grown here" (Stewart), or was it "about 1890 intended to be named Maraco for the MacRae Co. which developed land in the vicinity" and later shortened to Maco because it was "easier to pronounce" (Powell)? The Lumbee Indian town of Pembroke honors either the Earls of Pembroke in England (Stewart) or "Pembroke Jones (1825-1910), an official of the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad which intersected the Wilmington, Charlotte, and Rutherford Railroad here" (Powell). Hope sprang when Spring Hope was founded, for the denizens "hoped that success would spring from their settlement" (Stewart) and they also "hoped a spring nearby would always provide water for the community" (Powell). And over at Star the founders of the town trusted it would be a "star town" of great preeminence (Stewart), or, more down to earth, it was local merchant Angus Leach who noted that the site was of "high elevation . . . visible from all directions" (Powell).

There is doubt about Statesville. It was so named "probably from being near the center of the state" (Stewart), and there's another *probably* in the statement that it was "probably named in honor of the fact that North Carolina had approved the Federal Constitution a few weeks previously and thus become a State" (Powell). Since President Washington and Hiawatha are both admirable American folk heroes, we're torn to know what to believe about the town of Watha in Pender County, "locally believed by some to be from Washington" (Stewart), or from the "railroad station" there "originally named Hiawatha from which the present name was corrupted" (Powell).

Any way you look at it, studying the origin of place-names in North Carolina is a wonderful way to spend your time.

OTHER BOOKS COMING TO OUR DESK. J. Harold Stephens' *Echoes of a Passing Era* (author, 1320 Honeysuckle Drive, Fairborn, Ohio 45324, 144 pp., $1) recalls customs and folk ways of old-time rural America, with sections on "Geese Picking Time," "The Livery Stable," and so on. There are lists of superstitions and folk expressions. . . . In *The Old Homestead*, the University of Queensland Press has reprinted a classic work of Australian literature first published in 1912 (International Scholarly Book Services, Box 4347, Portland, Oregon 97208, 144 pp., illustrated, $5.35). It is the work of Steele Rudd (A. H. Davis), and bound with it is Rudd's *Memoirs of Corporal Keeley* (128 pp.). Both recount the folk ways of the Australian Outback in the early twentieth century. . . . *Leading Folklorists of the North* (Universitetsforlaget, Oslo, Norway, 1971, 435 pp., paperback) contains biographical sketches of twenty-five scholars from Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, the Faroe Islands, and Iceland, each sketch written by a different fellow scholar, the collection edited by Dag

Stromback. The sketches are (fortunately!) in English ($11.35 from Box 142, Boston, Massachusetts 02113). The most familiar name among the twenty-five is Finland's Antti Aarne(1867-1925), whose type-index of folktales is internationally used. . . . *Judeo-Spanish Ballads from Bosnia* (University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia 19104, 129 pp., $6.95, paperback), edited by Samuel G. Armistead and Joseph H. Silverman, is No. 4 of the University of Pennsylvania Press's series of Publications in Folklore and Folklife.

JENNY

by Heather Miller
Singletary Lake

I wonder does it please her,
does it seem worthy,
locked up all day in Saint John's?
She sits smiling at my infant girl,
and whispers,
patting my knee:
"That baby takes way back,
back to Cousin Mattie Hill Thompson.
The prettiest little face,
the curls all down her back,
she won't a bit of good."

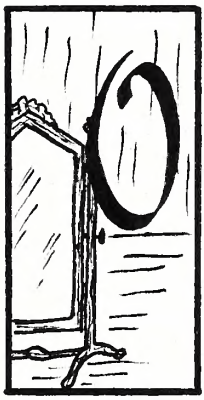
Grandmother. The white keyboard is ripped from the organ,
the long hair shingled to the skin,
and, upstairs,
the beds all blind and cold,
make me ashamed. Life hurts.

Cradle me, woman, cousin,
play my every key down hard,
comb out each silken thread
until I scream, for you,
"I'd do it all again!"

My infant girl with the prettiest little face,
hair all down her back,
turns old and weak. Speak to me, Jenny Ross.
Saint John, like a shepherd,
brings his bright angels to bleat behind your head.
Strike them down,
strangle them.
Then hold me, grandmother,
please me.

SOME FOLK MOTIFS IN THOMAS HARDY'S POETRY

by Lena Dula Mayberry



One evening in April of 1952, while I was paying a visit to a neighbor whose son had just drowned, I was startled by a sharp blow against the window behind me. A table lamp nearby allowed me to see the repeated plunge of a bird into the window pane. On the fourth hurtle it crumpled to the ledge, disappearing. I stepped to the porch in time to see the tiny brown bird quiver and lie still. With eerie weakness, I recalled a lesson from my Burke County childhood: a bird tapping on a window is an omen of death. A college sophomore at the time, I sloughed the thought as ridiculous and tried to put it out of my mind. The incident, however, had cast a spell, so I went home, leaving the solace of the grief-stricken family to the other neighbors. As I entered my own kitchen, the phone was ringing. My sister was calling to tell me that my father had just been killed in an automobile accident.

For twenty years my "scientific" mind chose not to wrestle with this uncanny coincidence. During the spring of 1971, however, during a class discussion at North Carolina State University, Dr. Guy Owen referred to the superstition of birds and moths being omens of death as one of the many folk motifs in the poetry of Thomas Hardy. This resurrected memory of my earlier experience became a catalyst that sent me through all of Hardy's poetry except *The Dynasts*.

An initial reading of Hardy's eight volumes of verse gave me over one hundred notations of folk motifs that I easily recognized as a part of my own Carolina Piedmont heritage. A review of the literature showed little treatment other than Ruth Firor's interesting *Folkways in Thomas Hardy*, which limits itself primarily to the novels.

After reading Hardy's *Collected Poems*, I tackled Dr. James O. Bailey's *The Poetry of Thomas Hardy*. Since Dr. Bailey had just

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published this book, I visited him for advice on further research and learned that no article had been written specifically on the folk motifs in the poetry; there were only occasional allusions to it. When I asked Dr. Bailey to comment on Hardy's attitude toward folk superstition, he responded with a mystifying twinkle: "He was folklorish in his feeling, but scientific in his thinking " (Personal interview, March 29, 1971, Chapel Hill).

That comment served as a springboard for a second reading of Hardy's poetry, a search that led to an awareness of the wealth of folk motifs of various types used in the *Collected Poems.*

Having been exposed to the scientists Huxley and Darwin, and later the psychoanalyst Freud, Hardy united the worlds of science and fantasy. Nurtured by a Wessex culture steeped in folklore, the poet inevitably used the fantasies of man's imagination as a backdrop for his own artistic creations. Maturing in an atmosphere filled with the folk music of his fiddling father and grandfather, he absorbed both the sound and sense of folk songs. This exposure to music, coupled with his later training in architecture, indelibly touched the style and content of his verse, as it did his novels. His artistic sensitivity ignited the folk instinct and created a poetry haunted by the sights and sounds of folklore.

Dr. J. O. Bailey's "folklorish-scientific" evaluation of Hardy is a view shared by Lord David Cecil, who writes: "Hardy said that the highest art was that which, though changing the appearance of what it describes, only does so in order the better to bring out its essential reality. He himself had this kind of art. In his union of bold fantasy and fundamental truth he is unique amongst English novelists. . . . Hardy's most extravagant flowers of fantasy are rooted in the common soil of human life" (*Hardy the Novelist,* p. 77). Hardy's folklore blooms perennially as "flowers of fantasy" throughout his verse, for his fertile mind is exposed to the realities of life. He uses folk motifs in that manner which he perceived to be the "highest art"—changing the appearance of things to bring out the essential reality.

While Hardy does not equate folklore with "highest art," he does recognize the value of intuitive thought. He treats with respect the folk customs and music of his native Wessex. Just as many legends have sprung from actual events, many human instincts have been clothed in folk customs. Today sociologists recognize customs associated with events of birth, marriage, death, and religious holidays as methods of maintaining social and geographic identity. Hardy's verse, replete with folk customs, has preserved the identity of his Wessex.

For example, the "homing instinct," which finds expression in the wish to die and be buried at one's home, is a custom repeatedly used in Hardy's poems. "In Death Divided" treats the horror of being

buried away from home. The couple of "Long Plighted" choose not to marry but to welcome death as companions in the churchyard. "How She Went to Ireland" is a tale of irony: Dora, who had longed to return to Ireland, has gone, but she does not know. This "homing" theme occurs in the last of Hardy's poems published during his life, "Christmas in the Elgin Room." The gods protest being removed from sunny Greece to gloomy England (James O. Bailey, *The Poetry of Thomas Hardy*, p. 625).

Like customs, music is unquestionably a social bond in any culture. Creating a refrain throughout Hardy's verse are rhythms of folk airs, ballads, dances, and nonsense rhymes. The folk music of childhood memories finds reprise in diverse ways. (See "The Stranger's Song," "The Bride-Night Fire," "One We Knew," "At the Entering of the New Year," "The Dance of the Phoenix," "The Song of Hope," "The Fiddler," "Meditations on a Holiday," "O I Won't Lead a Homely Life," "In the Small House," "The Colour," "An Ancient to Ancients," "The Vagrant's Song," "The Harvest Supper," and "Burning the Holly.") Common are references to allemands, maypole rites, flings, and skimmity rides. Also common are bits of Latin doggerel such as that in "The Sergeant's Song":

> Rollicum-rorum, tol-lol-lorum
> Rollicum-rorum, tol-lol-lay!

Far more intriguing to me, however, is his treatment of that body of folk motifs that moves into the realm of psychoanalysis. Hallucinatory projections into fantasy awaken the reader to Hardy's irony that is to him reality. Ghosts stalk his verse, phantoms stare through the windows, the dead converse with the living, and the plant and animal worlds share a common intelligence and reciprocal feelings. His backdrop of fantasy serves as a commentator or chorus. It provides both visual effects and sound track for his "Human Show." Man's guilt sometimes becomes his ghost. For instance, in "The Supplanter," a man, having forsaken his dead mistress who had borne his child, attends a party where he sees "a phantom through the pane / That beckons in despair." In "Reluctant Confession" a girl who had aborted her child sees an apparition of the babe wearing the clothes she had intended to make.

Often, however, the ghosts are simply tricks of memory, appearing in association with moonlight, mirrors, or windowpanes—three props that support folk motifs. For instance, in "The Phantom Horsewoman" a lonely, tired man watches a lovely girl riding by the Atlantic. At an auction a gentleman buys a glass ("The Cheval-Glass") once belonging to his love who had married unhappily, had become insane

and died. Thereafter he keeps it with him, even taking it overseas. In the glass he often sees the lost love brushing her hair or smiling at him. He plans to break the glass into fragments and bury them where he will be buried. In "Love Watches a Window" a girl worships her faithless lover before a stained-glass window featuring a saint whom she sees as her love, and in "Family Portraits" Hardy's ancestors step out of their frames.

In addition to the projected guilt and memories of the past, the illusions sometimes are fears concerning the future. Many of Hardy's poems treat illusory premonitions in typical folk fashion. In "At the Dinner Table" a man shows his wife a distorted mirror in which she sees herself as she later actually becomes. An omen of death, candle-wax taking the form of a shroud, is the subject of "Standing by the Mantelpiece" and "She Hears the Storm." (Ruth Firor, *Folkways in Thomas Hardy*, p. 15). Hardy's treatment of this psychological phenomenon of hallucination appears scientifically sound, as a viewer's mood influences what he sees, and the wax of a fluttering candle will frequently form the image of a shroud. Hallucinations in Hardy's verse commonly occur at weddings, funerals, and festivals, events around which a wealth of folk customs center. For example, the bride Lavine, in "At a Fashionable Dinner," sees her body lying beyond the door at a wedding dinner and accepts the fantasy as an omen of death. When the groom says that he sees only a "satin sheen," the bride moves to a second stage of hallucination, concluding that the groom really is seeing his next bride! Their contrasting attitudes—the bride's gloomy perspective and the groom's casual optimism—hint at eventual marital misfortune. In "Who's in the Next Room?" the bride succumbs to a combination of sensations as she *sees* a "figure wan," *hears* "somebody muttering in a language new," and *feels* "breath like a clammy draught."

"The Wind's Prophecy" carries the voice of a man's forebodings as he approaches the home of his love. He hears the wind "outshrieking" and laughing as if it grinned. In "She, I and They" a childless couple, conscious of not carrying on their sturdy line, hear their ancestors sigh from their portraits. Man's remorse over war gives ear to the puzzled phantom moans of a mouldering soldier in "A Christmas Ghost-Story." A woman appears in a windowpane-illusion in "Something Tapped," asking her love to join her, but when he approaches the window he sees only a white moth, a folk form of a reincarnated soul. The tapping on the windowpane is an omen of death. The *sight* of the moth is associated with the departed, while the *sound* of tapping predicts death. This fusion of the senses responding to the imagination is a technique Hardy frequently uses. There is a similar treatment in "On a Midsummer Eve." Here the lover commits three acts that,

according to folk beliefs, bring bad luck. He cuts a parsley stalk, blows through it towards the moon, and scoops his hands to drink (Bailey, personal interview, March 29, 1971). He sees in the water a reflection of a figure standing above him and hears a phantom voice that answers his "rough rhymes of chance" with a "tenderer verse." A sleepless father in "A Daughter Returns" chooses to remember his wayward girl when "the tempest mouths into the flue-top a word like a curse." In "Honeymoon Time at an Inn" the Spirits Ironic laugh and the Spirits of Pity sigh behind the wainscot. This premonition of marital misfortune for the couple is accompanied by the folk image of the bride as a moth. She breaks a mirror and quickly gathers the pieces in the moonlight, a sinister symbol in Hardy's verse.

Just as Hardy is probing the truth-in-legend in the realm in psychoanalysis, he also is fusing ancient animism and contemporary biochemistry. Plants and animals share a common bond in Hardy's verse. "His reverence for all life had some basis in his readings in science; in evolutionary theory, all living beings are akin" (Bailey, p. 162). Hardy draws heavily upon the folk belief that flowers grow from the dead—that plants are a phase in the life cycle, a new face for protoplasm. Although the mere chemical dependency has been accepted for centuries, the awareness of a shared *feeling* has until recently remained in the realm of fantasy. (See L. George Lawrence's "Plants Have Feelings, Too," *Organic Gardening and Farming*, April, 1971, pp. 64-67). Hardy, however, treats with reverence the empathy between the plant and animal worlds.

The folk belief that human life returns in vegetable form occurs often in Hardy's verse. "Rain on Her Grave" is typical:

> Soon will be growing
> Green blades from her mound,
> And daisies be showing
> Like stars on the ground,
> Till she form part of them—

"The Spell of the Rose" presents a woman in her grave seeing her life in retrospect. Her husband had planted trees, but no rose, the symbol of love. She had secretly planted the rosebush, but died before it bloomed. Although here we have no chemical dependency, we find an empathy: the rose flourishes after the woman's death. Bailey associates this poem with a letter (now in the Dorset County Museum) which Hardy wrote to Mrs. Florence Henniker on December 28, 1918: "As it is an exceptionally mild afternoon I have been gardening a little, and had to tie up a rosebush planted by Emma a month or two before her death; it has grown luxuriously, & she would be pleased if

she could know & that I care for it" (Bailey, p. 306). "Transformations" speaks of many forms of plant life as dead persons unknown to Hardy. His last listing, however, is a personal one: "A fair girl long ago / Whom I often tried to know / May be entering this rose." He concludes about this union of life:

> So, they are not underground,
> But as nerves and veins abound
> In the growths of upper air.

"The Fading Rose," while it speaks to the subject of fading love, also addresses itself to the ancient belief that plants respond to human affections. The rose asks, "O where is she / Who used to come and muse on me?" The rose, in bloom, but sad, shedding its petals, responds to the absence of its keeper. The "green thumb" idea, a folk motif inherited and perpetuated by Hardy, has since been given scientific credence. (See *Life* Special Report, "Love and Hate in a Bean Patch," August 20, 1971, by David Chandler).

Animals, too, were prominent in the folklore of Wessex. Hardy had a menagerie of pets who were buried in a private graveyard and for whom he wrote epitaphs (Bailey, personal interview, March 29, 1971). His treatment of animals in his verse, however, goes beyond affection. They rebuke, inspire, or perplex man. Sometimes they share his emotions. In "The Oxen" the cattle kneel on Christmas Eve. According to the legend, only those who can see ghosts at Christmas have the power of hearing the cattle, sheep, and horses talk during the holy season (Firor, p. 151). The poet concludes that if someone were to ask him to go watch the oxen

> I should go with him in the gloom,
> Hoping it might be so.

Sometimes the animals serve as man's weather forecast, as the eels do in "Night-time in Mid-Fall." "An August Midnight" is an acceptance of the diverse "Earth-Secrets" of five insects who visit his writing table and besmear his new-penned line.

Birds appear more often than animals in Hardy's poetry, often becoming, as they do in folk beliefs, messengers between Man and Mystery. For instance, in "The Alarm" a soldier befriends a tangled bird that rewards his kindness by guiding the soldier in the right direction and ultimately to the right decision. "The Darkling Thrush" knows "Some blessed Hope." The capital letter for Hope suggests that it is religious hope (Bailey, p. 168).

Although Hardy cannot be validly referred to as a sociologist, a

psychologist, or a biochemist, he at least has a feeling for intuitive knowledge that has become a part of folk literature—intuitive knowledge that has, in many cases, proved to be more fact than fiction. While the preceding examples of Hardy's use of folk motifs in his poetry are a sketchy sampling, they do, I think, indicate that he depended heavily upon his native folklore to capture the culture of his beloved Wessex. Moreover, a man well versed in the scientific developments of his age, trained in music and architecture, has produced verse enriched by a delicate coupling of scientific thinking and folklorish feeling.

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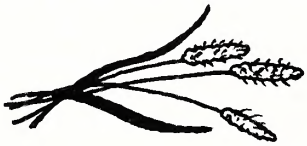
RURAL ECONOMICS

by Lodwick Hartley
Raleigh

To quicken sleeping fields
God gives the rain
And by their overplus,
The seething grain,
He chastens us.



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NORTH CAROLINA FOLKLORE

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AUGUST, 1972

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NORTH CAROLINA FOLKLORE

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Notes

The contents of this second special issue of *North Carolina Folklore* this year—the first special was the much acclaimed Student Issue last February—have been chosen to appeal to young readers. Free copies are being sent to school libraries throughout North Carolina. Since the Society's budget does not allow expansion of the publication beyond the mailings in May and November, the editors are grateful for financial help provided by the North Carolina Arts Council and the School of Liberal Arts at North Carolina State University. To both of them, our many thanks!

From Grace Matlock (see her "Three Tar Heel Folktales" on page 128 of this issue) comes a letter regarding last November's "His Worship the John Kuner": "This same custom was observed or practiced in Cobb County, Georgia, when I was a very young child. Only down here it was called 'serenading.' Everyone wore homemade masks, and the men dressed as women. Come to think of it, women sometimes went also, but they dressed as men, and they entertained by buckdancing and playing the Jew's harp. The teenagers usually provided the skits, music, and dancing. The serenading took place between Christmas and New Year's. Special cakes—chocolate, raisin, and fresh coconut—were baked especially for the serenaders. Fruits, nuts, and candy were served along with punch and coffee. Sometimes, if the serenaders were in the home of friends whom they especially liked, they unmasked and were joined on their trek by their host and hostess. Unfortunately, the custom died out before I was old enough to go along."

RAIN is the title of Talmadge Moose's carbon pencil drawing which won First Prize in the 1971 Gallery of Contemporary Art's 34th Southeastern Graphics Show. During his growing-up years, the artist, a native of Albemarle, spent a lot of time hanging around his father's service station and grocery store on the Norwood Road in southern Stanly County. When someone came in, especially a farmer of portly stature and sporting an unaccustomed cigar, he would be given the tongue-in-cheek salutation "I see it's gonna rain," followed by some good-natured joshing. Country folks had an old saying, "When pigs start toting sticks in their mouths, it's a sure sign of rain." Later it was applied to farmers "toting" a cigar. The barren fields behind the farmer are, we trust, soon to get the rain they need. (Photograph of drawing supplied by Mrs. Ruth Moose, 1916 Bentley Place, Charlotte 28205.)

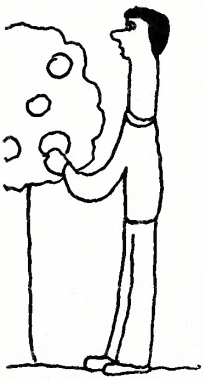
Talmadge Moose *Rain*

ONCE UPON A TIME

A Collection of Young People's Folklore

Last November, at the Reeds Elementary School four miles northwest of Lexington in Davidson County, students in two sections of the fourth grade and in two sections of the fifth grade prepared scrapbooks of folklore concentrating on weather superstitions and local traditions, on mystery stories and tall tales. Their teachers were Mrs. Jean Burkhart, Mrs. Helen Hancock, Mrs. Mary Worthington, and Mrs. Mary Skeen. Selections from these scrapbooks, with the students' names appended in the way they chose to sign their contributions, make for reading quite unusual. Editing of the selections has been inconsiderable. The illustrations are exact miniatures of those drawn by the students to accompany their writing. The tall tales, particularly, show what a fourth-grader or a fifth-grader can come up with when his imagination is challenged.

HOW LONG NECK SAM SAVED A TOWN. Once upon a time there was a man named Long Neck. The reason why his name was Long Neck was because his neck went exactly 5 ft ¼ of an inch over the highest tree in town, which was 5,000 ft high.



All the children in town loved him. When I was 6 years old, I would go down to the creek, and who do you think would be there? Why, Long Neck, of course. He used to get and give them [?] to children. That's why children loved him. One day everybody was hollering, "We'll be washed up!" Long Neck asked the lady in the green house on 5th Ave., "What's wrong?" She said, "There's a bad storm a coming, and we don't know what to do." "Well," said Long Neck, "I'll fix that."

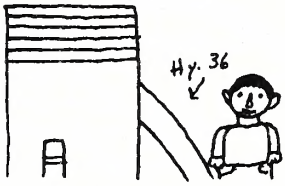
So he took all the big black clouds, and dug a hole, and twisted and squeezed those clouds in the hole. All the rain from the clouds went in that hole, and formed a lake. From that day on, everybody knows Long Neck, of course. The End. *Angie*

THE SNAIL IN THE WELL. Once there was a snail. He was a very large snail. He was 12 inches long, and 3 inches wide. He was walking one day and climbed up on a well. He was at the edge of the well when he fell in. There were three or four fish, and a bucket was in the water too. He fell in it. A phoebe bird flew by. The phoebe bird cranked the snail up. One of the fish had jumped in, so the phoebe bird flew down and got the fish and ate him. The snail climbed up. He said, "Thank you," and went on with his businees. *Randy L.*

JACK AND THE WITCH. One time there was an old witch. She was a mean witch. She would eat anything. One day she got two little girls and kept them in a cage. She had a big giant bird to watch them. The little girls were scared. The witch was 14 feet tall! She was, really she was! She was 8 feet wide and her hair came to the ground. She was a mean witch at that.

Then one day a man named Jack came. The people told Jack what had happened. So he followed her to her cottage. He went up to her door. She came at him. He said, "Stop! Stop! I have something you always wanted–earrings! But wait! Your ears are not pierced." "I will let you tie me down so you will not hurt me." So he tied her down. He ran around the cottage and got the two little girls, and they lived happily ever after. *Dianne Craver*

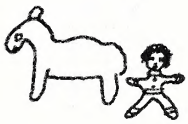
BIG JOHN. This is a story about Big John Smith. John was born in Georgia. Soon Georgia became too crowded, so the Smith family moved to California. John was 22 feet tall and weighed 998 lbs. As you might have known, John Smith was Paul Bunyan's cousin. Paul was 28 feet tall and 6 inches.



Paul Bunyan was famous for logging. John was famous for his green thumb. Yes, he was an excellent planter. He didn't plant gardens or food, but he growed the greenest grass in the West. Speaking of West, Big John lived in California and Mexico. He mostly planted grass in the desert.

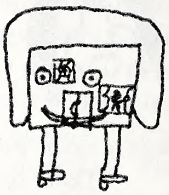
When he walked down Main Street, the top five floors of the Empire Building fell to the ground, but the good thing about it, he only came to town every two years. *Mitchell K. Rogers*

BIG BLUE. Big Blue was a very big dog who lived in the woods. Nobody tried to catch him till one day a young man said, "I'll catch that dog." So the next day he tried to find the dog, but he couldn't find him. So the next day he set a trap. But the man didn't know that trap was too little.



That dog was 900 feet tall and weighed 8 tons. That dog was so big he formed the Great Lakes. One day the young man found tracks of a dog, so he followed them. There stood the biggest dog you have ever seen. It took the man one hour to see the top of that dog. But the man didn't try to catch that dog. He just ran away. *Mark Rachels*

A HOUSE THAT MOVED. There was a house, but it was a big house. It was a moving house too. But it would not move, and the people were glad. One day the house was going to walk away, and the people were not happy who lived in it. The house walked to the river, and it almost jumped in. But it didn't jump because he or she did not want to hurt the people. Then the house went back to the place where it should be. The next day the house moved again, but this time it fell in love. The house did not move again, and the people who lived in the house were happy. *Sherry Crouch*



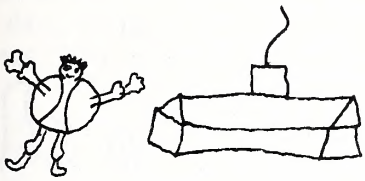
THE OLD MAN AND HIS BEARD. There was once an old village where one person lived. He was an old man. He was very fat. He had a very long beard because there was no store for him to buy a razor.

One day he was walking down Main Street and his beard got caught under a rock. He pulled and pulled and pulled, but it won't come loose. He had to sleep there overnight. The next morning he pulled and pulled and pulled, but it still won't come loose.

One day a deer came along and the old man ask the deer to help him. The old man got a-holt of the deer's horns, and they pulled and pulled and pulled, but it still won't come loose. That night an old owl flew by. He was a very wise owl. The old man ask him to help him get loose. The owl told him to lift up the rock and his beard would be free. So he picked up the rock and his beard was free.

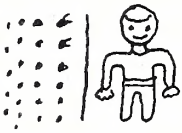
The next morning he went into the nearest village and bought him a razor. He shaved off his beard and never [grew] another beard. *Randy Comer*

OH JACK. One day in New York City there was a man named Oh Jack. He was so big, fat, ugly, and dump because he did not go to school. His house was as long and wide as the Mississippi River. His bed was big enough for 20 men to sleep in, but it was too little for him. One day Jack was walking down the road. He heard a scream. It was a lady. He said, "What's the matter?" exclaimed Jack. The woman said, "I dropped my baby in the lake, and I can't swim." Jack quickly got down on his hands and knees and drunk the lake up, and saved the lady's baby. She kissed Jack so many times that Jack's cheeks were as red as a cherry. He went home and looked in the mirror. He was sick. There was a doctor. He came 1,000,000 miles to make him well again. It took 100 aspirins and twenty-five glasses of orange juice. When he got better, he went home and said, "Life-saving is not for me." The end. *Jeffrey Owen*



JOHN TALL. Once there lived a boy named John Tall. He was no bigger than our thumb. John lived with his parents, Paul and Polly Tall.

They lived in a little house and were very poor. They had little food, so John decided to go out and work, but everybody said [he] was too small and turned him down. So he worked out on the farm.



One day a man came by selling all kinds of seeds. So John bought some carrot seeds. And they grew and grew. After John ate one, he was the size of a full-sized man. *Linda Conrad*

PAN AMALE WHO HELPED MEN NOT TO STEAL. Once upon a time there was a man named Pan Amale. He was a good man, but all his neighbors were wicked. They would go into his house and steal. Pan knew this, so he tried to stop them.

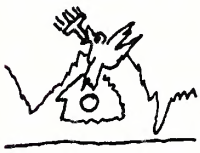
Later he thought of a good idea. He would put things in the woods and dress up as a bear. Maybe they wouldn't steal any more.

So they found out about the valuable things in the woods. So they went into the woods one by one, and out jumped Amale as a bear. He said, "Don't you touch those, or I'll eat you up and if you ever steal again, I'll eat you up." So that man and others never stole again. *Stephen S.*

THE HORSE MISTY. Once upon a time there was a horse, and his name was Misty. He was very sad, because he did not have any friends. He was very unhappy. Well, one reason, he was allergic to flowers. They made him very unhappy. One day he went for a walk, and he met a man with flowers in his hand that he was going to take to his wife. But somehow he didn't have any flowers, because Misty the horse blowed them away.

Misty was very sorry. Then he met a woman with a flower in her hat, and he sneezed and mess up her new hair-do. Soon Misty met a horse. Her name was Daisy. She loved him and they got married and had a little colt that loved flowers but was allergic to them. *Angie Martin*

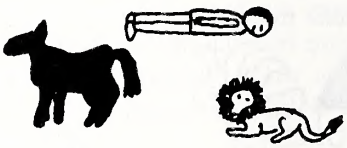
WHY THE SKY IS BLUE. At one time the sky was yellow and white. It had been painted by yellow and white birds. It had been 200 years ago. So now some bluebirds wanted it blue. So they painted and painted. When they had just about all of it finished, the bird ran out of paint. One of the birds said it needed another coat. The others said it didn't, so they went to bed and the sky turned black. It was just nightbirds. In the morning there were a yellow and white spot, so the birds tried painting it blue. One of the birds tried making a bargain. It worked! The bargain was that the sun and moon take turns. And never again did the birds paint the sky again.



The End. *Dana Fritts*

LARRY AND SAM. Once upon a time there lived an old man. This old man had 6 geese, 2 dogs, 1 cow, 9 pigs, and an old mule.

This mule's name was Sam. Sam was not like the other mules. One night Sam was out in the field and saw an old log cabin. Sam went in. There he found a baby lion. So Sam got the lion on his back and started for his stable.



Week after week went by and the lion grew and grew. One night as they were walking through town, they saw that the bank was being robbed. They ran to the bank. The lion got in front of the robbers and let out a big roar.

The robbers backed up, and Sam kicked them toward the wall. They hit the wall and was knocked out.

After this Sam named the lion Larry. *Glenn Sink*

DR. MOE McMILLAN. I'm going to tell you about a man. This man, you wouldn't believe his size. He was big and fat with huge feet. He was larger than an elephant. He weighed about twice as much as an elephant. He was about a mile wide. He could eat ten elephants in one bite.

He had a very sick dog. He had the flu. This is an awful disease. Only a shot would cure it. One day he found some medicine to cure it. He give the dog some medicine. The dog was better. Then they had dinner. Dr. Moe McMillan has 20 miles of spaghetti, 1000 hot dogs, and ten elephants, and *then* he had dinner. *Jan R. Myers*

THE REDBIRD. Once upon a time I was looking up in a tree and I saw a Redbird. He looked at me and said, "Hello, Donna." I almost passed out. I couldn't believe my ears. Then I heard another voice saying, "How are you feeling today?" I finally said, "I'm just fine. How are you?" He said, "I've got a headache, but it will go away tonight." He said, "Can I go to school with you today?" "Today's Saturday. We don't go to school on Saturday." "I know. Can I go Monday?" I said, "Maybe if you are good."

That evening that poor little Redbird got shot. *Donna Shoaf*

THE CROOKED FAMILY. Once upon a time there was this crooked family. They were very nice. They had a horse too. His name was George. The crooked man name's was Larry. His wife's name was Mary. They had a little girl and her name was Cindy. The man came out and said, "I've got to go back in and go to bed now." So he went back in and laid down for awhile. He came back out and got on George and rode to get him a crooked horse. His wife was crooked, and his daughter was crooked, but his horse wasn't. So he rode trying to find a crooked horse.

Finally he came to a man. He said, "Man, I'll give you my straight horse if you'll give me your crooked one." So the man said, "Yes, sir, I'll do it." So he [took] the crooked horse and put the straight one back. He rode home and went back off again, trying to find another crooked one.

He needed two more. So he found two more and bought them, because he didn't have two straight horses, so he bought them. He tied one rope on one, and another rope on the other one, and rode home with all three horses. He went home and got the crooked woman and the crooked girl, and they rode off.

They found a crooked cat. So they had to find a bigger house. It was a big cat. They found a crooked house and they moved in it. It was beautiful. They loved the house. The cat, the woman, the man, & the girl loved it so much that they stayed in it for their whole life. That was the story of The Crooked Family. *Nita Faye Rominger*

WEATHER SUPERSTITIONS

When the acorns are big, a bad snow is ahead. *John Loveless*

If you hung a snake in a tree, it will rain. *Junior*

A big crop of plums, it means a rainy winter. *Sherry Crouch*

When a squirrel stacks up on nuts, it means a hard winter. *Doug*

When the rainbow comes out, it will rain the next day. *Forrest*

When there are a lot of persimmons on a tree, you will have a bad winter. *Vickie Martin*

If a rooster crows at night, it will rain before morning. *Bobby Hill*

Number of fogs in August determines number of snows during winter. *Vickie Martin*

If the snow lays on the ground 3 days, it is waiting for more snow. *Teresa*

If it rains and the sun is out, it will rain the next day. *Dale*

If you find a white fuzz worm, it will be a good winter. *Marshall*

If there is a Circle around the moon with a star in it, it will snow. *Linda Simmerson*

If you see a ring around the sun, it will rain for three days. *Tammy*

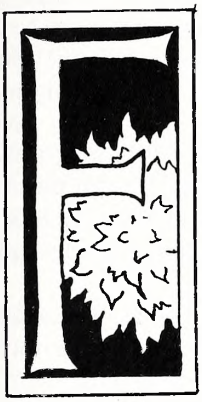
When a Groundhog sees his Shadow, that means that it Will be 6 Weeks of bad Weather. *Jeff L.*

If a cat goes under a drum and goes to sleep, it will rain by two hours. *Keith Martin*

God will never destroy the world with water. *Jeffrey C.*

THE FIREBALL

by Mary Armstrong Herrera



lossie Binton worked for Granny Hill, my grandmother, cooking and washing dishes and cleaning up Granny's store. She was a poor hillbilly girl who just went to the fourth grade up at Valmead School, and she started dipping snuff when she was twelve years old. Her teeth were black and rotten and some of what were left whole were green up at her gums.

The Bintons lived in a house with a rusty tin roof and grey boards that had never been painted, half a mile up the road from Granny's store, way back in a littler holler, a tiny valley, circled by three mountains which were humped like a sway-backed mule. If you walked up the railroad track and over the trussul–educated people say *trestle*–and along the path around the side of the mountain it was shorter, and you could meet the ball of fire.

Behind the house, which is now my Uncle Claude's summer cottage, was a spring where the Bintons got their water. The house was in a clearing, but the spring was at the foot of the mountain at the back of the cabin.

Flossie said one evening when it was nearly dark, she went to the spring for a bucket of water, and it is dark and gloomy at the foot of those mountains when the sun is down behind the trees and the shadows of the mountains cover everything like a big black coat. She squatted down, shooed the bugs away, dipping the tin bucket in the cool water. When the bucket was full, she straightened up from leaning over the spring. She turned to start back to the house, but quick as a bolt of lightning in a storm, a bright light, shiny as the sun, shone from behind a tree ten yards in front of her. It was a ball of fire, big as a washtub, and started flying towards her, slowly at first, and then faster and faster, she said, like a bullet aimed directly at her. Little pieces of sparks fell on the ground like from a sparkler on the Fourth

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** *Mrs. Herrera (R.F.D. #1, Box 171, Harrisburg, N. C. 28075) was brought up among the mountains of Caldwell County. Her "The Miseries and Folk Medicine" appeared in* NCF *last February.*

of July. She dropped the bucket, cool water splashing on her bare legs, and screaming, at the top of her voice, ran to the house.

Her family met her at the door. "What's the matter with you, you fool girl?" her papa asked her. "Did a copperhead wrop hitself 'round your laig?" He laughed, punched the shaking Flossie in the shoulder with his fist, laughing again.

"Hit was a farball flyin' right at my back. I could feel hit like the devil hisself had his hand on me." Her face as white as a corpse, and tiny beads of sweat, like shiny diamonds, shone on her forehead.

Her mama and papa laughed at her again, and her mama said she was crazy as a mad dog or had been drinking some of the likker her papa made.

"You better leave that stuff alone. Hit ain't fur girls anyways. Done got one feller on the chain gang, and hit makes girls go plumb crazy. Ain't nobody sees no farball 'less they got a guilty feelin' inside," her papa told her. "Jist go to bed and hit'll rain tonight and that'll put out that far." They all laughed again.

Flossie and her two sisters slept in the same bed, and she said even though she didn't like to sleep in the middle, that night she was glad to sleep between them, even if they did stink and kick her.

"They smelt worse than a slop jar that ain't been emptied in a week, but if that far ball come through the winder, it would of got one of them first."

She wouldn't go out of the house for three days, but she began to think it really might have been her imagination, spots in her eyes, she said, and started going out alone in the dark again. Anyway, she had a boyfriend, and he said it was more fun to be with her in the dark.

"Can't do no lovin' in the daylight," he told her.

One night she was going home from work in Granny's store—Granny had made her stay late to finish the ironing—alone on the path with bushes, trees, and rocks on the mountainside and a field on the other edge of the path, when sudden-like, the ball of fire rushed towards her. She turned to run back to the store, and the ball of fire was in front of her, blocking her path. She turned to run to her home, and again the ball of fire was in front of her. She started to cross the field, and on the ground right in front of her was a copperhead snake, its eyes shining up at her, like a cat's eyes or like two green clear marbles.

Her legs wouldn't move, she said, as though they were not connected to her body. "Hit wus like my laigs wus stuck in the ground like a big rock nobody could move. I could feel my life jist runnin' out my fangers and toes I wus so weak, but then Jesus saw fit to save me. That copperhead just burned up to ashes under that far and then that far just went away quick as hit come."

Right then her papa and brothers came running down the path. They had heard her screams—that was before TV, and you can hear a sound a clear mile echoing between those mountains and rocks—and thought she had gone plumb crazy now or that a bear had her though no one had seen a bear in those parts in years. They carried her home, one carrying her shoulders and two carrying a leg each, and they laughed all the way up the path and told her they would get my mama, who was a nurse, to cure her of her spells—for they thought mama could cure anything, just like a doctor.

"Pat's got all kinds of medicine for anythang. She put that black stuff on my sore and it drew all that festering out. She's the only one of them Hills worth anythang, and she used to be a nurse over at Morganton, and she knows all about crazy people."

When they laid her down on the bed, everybody looking at her and laughing, her mama noticed a burning odor.

"Sumum's burnin' in here. You boys been puttin' them cigrets out on the floor agin? You goner burn this house down," she told her sons. She looked at them angrily.

The Bintons searched the house for the smell and found nothing, and as Flossie sat up in bed to look around to see what was going on, her mama saw the ends of her long brown hair.

"My god, her hair's been singed. Hit's frizzy like a nigger's hair, and hit stinks like hit's been burned," she said as she touched Flossie's hair. "But hit ain't no farball. Ain't no sich thang. She probly stuck her head in the oven puttin' in biscuits down at Murry Hill's store."

There was silence in the house like a funeral. Everybody stared into each other's eyes and their mouths hung open.

None of them wanted to go to bed that night, but finally they all fell asleep, sitting in chairs and lying on the floor in their clothes. The only one in bed was Flossie, and she fell asleep in half an hour. When the sun came up Papa Binton was still sitting in a chair by the front door. His eyes were closed, but the kerosene lamp, on the floor beside him, was still burning.

None of the Bintons ever saw the fireball again, but they looked out the door before they'd set foot outside, and one wouldn't walk down the path to the road after dark without a brother or a sister along. They went to church every Sunday, for awhile, and Flossie told me she never stole any more money out of Granny's white wash pan where she kept her money.

I hadn't thought of the fireball for years until Uncle Claude told me he was sleeping alone in that cabin last summer, and a little after midnight he woke up, as though an invisible hand had touched him, and he knew something was wrong because all the crickets and nightbugs

had stopped singing. There was dead silence. He said he looked out and there was nothing strange, nothing unusual, except there was no sound.

"I watched for an hour. I had my loaded shotgun right beside me. Weren't a thang out there I could see but sumpum wus there, sumpum you can't hear or see. I knowed it sure as I know my own name. Then I jist rolled over and went to sleep. I figured if it wus goin' to git me, weren't nothing I could do 'bout it. Never did happen agin, but I ain't never gonna ferget it."

I wonder if it was that fireball looking for Flossie.

HELP NEEDED ON "ROSIN THE BOW"

Letter from Kern Lunsford

My physician-friend Dr. Austin T. Hyde mentioned that you [editor Guy Owen] know my father, Bascom Lamar Lunsford, so I am sending you some clippings about his 90th birthday celebration last week. He was in fine fettle, for he thrives on such as that, and he enjoyed every minute of it.

My chief reason for writing to you is to ask your help in finding some more words to a song Dad used to sing when I was about five years old. I have some aluminum discs, made at Columbia University in 1935, and I am attempting to tape them. It is a stupendous task, for they are a little wider than standard, and of course the aluminum is too soft for my diamond needle. There are 80 of them, with 2 to 4 songs on each one, about 300 songs in all.

In recording them, I ran across many short songs I can remember hearing him sing when I was a child. One of them was called:

** *We couldn't help Miss Kern Lunsford (Jonas Ridge, N. C. 28641), who wrote us on March 30. We hope some of our readers can.*

ROSIN THE BOW

'Way down on the south side of Cuby, some seventy-five years ago,
I was born a sweet little baby, and they christened me Rosin the Bow,
They christened me Rosin the Bow, they christened me Rosin the Bow,
I was born a sweet little baby, and they christened me Rosin the Bow.

When I am laid out on the counter, the ladies will all want to know,
And do not forget to tell them, "Here lies old Rosin the Bow,
Here lies old Rosin the Bow, here lies old Rosin the Bow,"
And do not forget to tell them, "Here lies old Rosin the Bow."

And then place me two little donnicks, put one at the head and the toe,
And do not forget to write on it, "Here lies old Rosin the Bow,
Here lies old Rosin the Bow, here lies old Rosin the Bow,"
And do not forget to write on it, "Here lies old Rosin the Bow."

Last Tuesday, I asked Dad where he learned it and he said from his mother, but some man had taught him one of the verses. I also asked him about "donnicks," since I hadn't been able to find anything like it in my dictionary. He said, "Colloquial for little rocks."

His memory is still phenomenal, and several students have interviewed him recently, with recorders, preparing to write theses. He complains of various ailments, but his mind is as sharp as ever.

I am sure there must have been other verses to "Rosin the Bow," but he did not know them. It has a lovely melody, with a wide range. If you can give me some idea who may know it, I shall be glad to correspond about it.

S O U T H E R N P O E T R Y R E V I E W

Guy Owen, editor

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SOUTHERN POETRY REVIEW
Department of English
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TWO JOHN STORIES

by F. Roy Johnson

f the many folktales that we have collected in the northeastern counties of North Carolina, there are but two which tell of the exploits and adventures of John, the well-known mythic hero of mountain lore. One of these, and perhaps both, went against the folklore current, and moved eastward from the mountains onto the coastal plains.

HOW JOHN GOT RICH. (Two versions of how John got rich are still told in both eastern and western rural communities of Northampton County. On November 11, 1971, Rufus Hughes, a black aged 54, of Route 1, Garysburg, told me one of the versions as narrated by his grandmother Emma Hughes, who lived in and about Jackson all her life.)

This panther got to traveling the woods about the back fields, crying and frightening the black hands from their work into their quarters. After awhile he got so tight that Old Master couldn't make them go to work in the back fields.

Then Old Master saw that something had to be done to keep the grass from eating up the crops. He had one man who said that he wasn't afraid of the "panter." He was big and strong, and he could whip any man whut took him on. His name was John. So Old Master asked John if he wouldn't catch the panther.

"I will, Boss, if the pay is right."

Things were so bad that Old Master said, "John, I'll give you whatever you ask."

And John said, "Master, just make me rich."

So Old Master talked with the neighbors, and all agreed to get a lot of money together, for "dat panter" was about to ruin everybody.

So John went into the back field to catch the panther. He

** *The most recent book of the author (Box 217, Murfreesboro, N. C. 27855) is* The Algonquians: Pre-History. *Later this year he will publish a second volume on Algonquian history and folk tradition.*

hollered; the panther heard and he hollered. They hollered back and forth until the panther came. But John did not stand to fight. He ran just like the other niggers—straight for the house—panther right on his heels. John ran around the house, panther right behind him. John jumped through the front door, panther right behind him. John ran through the hall, panther right behind him. John ran out the back door and slammed it shut on the panther. Then John ran around to the front door and slammed it shut too.

John ran to Old Master and cried, "Master, Master, I got the 'panter.'"

"No, John! I saw you running, and he almost had you."

"But Boss, come and see. I got him in the house."

When Old Master saw John had caught the panther, he saddled his horse and rode all over the country collecting money for him.

After that John was big, strong, fearless and RICH!

(Namon Blythe, 63, of Route 1, Conway, tells a slightly different version. Before going to the back field at night, John opened the door to the log corncrib. When the panther gave chase, John ran to the barn and rolled under it while the panther jumped through the open door, which was then closed on him. Next day John wouldn't tell the master how he caught the panther, leaving the mystery to enhance his greatness.)

JOHN SPEAKS THE MASTER'S LANGUAGE. (The second John tale apparently came from West Virginia. Vernon Lee Harris, 51, of Route 1, Como, Hertford County, says it was told him by an uncle who came to Southampton County, Virginia, to pick cotton soon after the Civil War.)

This man John came to the old plantation the day that the overseer took the master's wife and daughter to town. So the master took him on a tour and showed him the things that might be of interest to him as the new butler.

First the master carried John into the house and showed him a pair of boots. "John, you know what these are?" he asked.

"Yes, Boss, they's boots."

"No, John, they're *traveling trampees*!"

The master led John to a bed and asked, "Know what this is, John?"

"Yes, a bed."

"No, John, that's my *flower of Eve*!"

Then the master led John outside, and as they walked towards the barn he showed him a path and asked, "Know what this is, John?"

"Yes, a path."

"Wrong, John. On this plantation that is a *dusty beatum*!"

A black cat ran across the path before they got to the barn, and the master asked John if he knew what that was.

"Yes, a black cat."

"Wrong again, John. Here, that's the *highball besuna*!"

When they got to the barn, the master asked, "You know what this is, John?"

"Yassah," John replied with rising enthusiasm, for he had worked on a farm long enough to know what there was to know about farming. "That is your hay barn!"

"No, John, this is the *flapperation*; and this is where you will stay."

With that John was set about his duties. A few days later John came running to the Great House crying for help: "Hey, Master, get up out of your *flower of Eve*, put on your *traveling trampees*, come down the *dusty beatum*; your *highball besuna* has set your *flapperation* on fire!"

The master lay a few moments without answering; and his daughter said, "Dad, tell him to say it one more time."

This time John said it right: "Hey, Master, get up out of your bed, put on your boots, come down the dusty path. Your black cat has set your hay barn on fire."

Is it true that before you prepare rattlesnake meat for eating you must, when you kill the snake, hang it up to see if it has bitten itself and has poisoned its own meat? I have heard that when you hang up the snake, if it has bitten itself the meat will fall off. Also, how do you prepare it for a meal? V.W.

The Wildlife Commission expert consulted by HOTLINE said he's eaten lots of rattlesnake meat but hasn't ever hung one up to see if the meat falls off. As for cooking: soak it 10 to 15 minutes in salt water, then fry quickly (before you change your mind) in butter or oil in a medium hot skillet that has been dusted with flour. The snake is cooked in much the same manner as chicken and frog legs and has much the same taste. It's very tender—we're told.

—HOTLINE, *The Raleigh Times*,
April 17, 1972

THE VANISHING HITCHHIKER IN EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA

by Douglas J. McMillan

One of the most fascinating items appearing in a number of interesting versions in the holdings of the ECU Folklife Archive is the ubiquitous international folktale "The Vanishing Hitchhiker." This is the well-known oral tale in which on a rainy evening a young lady ghost hitches a ride "home." This tale is also known locally as "The Ghostly Hitchhiker," "The Deathly Hitchhiker," "The Ghost on the Road," "The Apparition," "The Girl in the White Dress," and "The Birthday Ghost."

This folktale is one of the most convincing sources of evidence for the continuing vitality of oral literature in modern times and in places both urban and rural. The tale is known in hundreds of nineteenth and twentieth-century versions from Italy, Ireland, Turkey, China, Hawaii, and the mainland United States.[1] It is also, of course, very much alive today in Eastern North Carolina as the examples which follow demonstrate.

One student (who contributed a version of "The Vanishing Hitchhiker" which was told to her when she was eleven years old, nine years ago, in Arlington, Virginia) had this remark added as a postscript: "I am surprised that I actually believed this story when it was told to me. I stopped believing it fairly recently when I became aware of all the different versions of this story."[2]

To date, eleven versions of "The Vanishing Hitchhiker" have been collected by ECU students from eleven different locations in Eastern North Carolina. Although these versions are from Eastern North Carolina, the ghost herself is sometimes reported to have appeared elsewhere in the state. Five of these versions are given here with pertinent information about the place and date of collecting, the student collector, the informant, and the ECU Folklife Archive collection accession number from which each item comes.

** *Douglas J. McMillan is Professor and Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of English, East Carolina University, Greenville.*

BATH VERSION: "Apparition near Greensboro"

Collected in November 1969 by Ruth Rowland of Pinetown as she recollected having heard it earlier at the Bath High School; accession number 1969-11-13 (18):

While I was in Bath High School, the students began telling the story of the ghost that had been seen by a man a few nights before. It was a very foggy night. It seems that it was in the wee hours of the morning that the man was returning home from a business convention. As he started under a certain underpass at Greensboro, he was flagged to a stop by a young girl dressed in a white formal. He stopped and asked if he could help her. She answered that he could take her home if he did not mind. She gave him her home address in Greensboro. It was on a dimly lighted street where the home was finally located.

The man drew the car to the curb and got out to open the car door for his passenger. When he reached the other side of the car, he found no one there. Thinking that she may have gone in, he rang the doorbell to make sure she was safe. After a time an old lady answered his knock on the door.

He told her he had brought her daughter home and wanted to make sure that she had gotten inside safely. The lady began to cry and told him, "My daughter was killed at an intersection just outside of Greensboro twenty years ago tonight on her way home from the high school dance. Tonight is not the first time that she has since tried to get home."

CREEPIN' SWAMP VERSION: "The Ghostly Hitchhiker"

Collected in May 1970 by Peter Greenspan of Greenville from Lewis Sutton, also of Greenville; accession number 1970-5-15 (47):

There is a place named Creepin' Swamp between New Bern and Greenville where my brother picked up a girl hitchhiker. The girl got into the car and began crying; when my brother asked what the matter was, the girl suddenly disappeared. She left her pocketbook in the car and my brother looked inside and found her address. He went to the girl's home to give her parents her pocketbook, and the girl's mother told him that the girl had been dead for a number of years and that every once in awhile she would appear and get into somebody's car and ride for awhile before she would disappear. It seems as though the spot where my brother picked her up was the identical spot where the young girl had died in a car wreck.

GREENVILLE VERSION: "The Ghostly Hitchhiker"

Collected in November 1969 by Sandra Glenn of Greenville from Tom Hatton, also of Greenville; accession number 1969-11-12 (33):

I was riding from Greenville to Winston-Salem and decided to

take the old road to Greensboro. It was early dawn and the month was October. I was very drowsy but suddenly woke up when I saw a young girl dressed in a long gown standing on the highway. I stopped and asked her if I could help her. She said that her date had gotten mad when she stopped his advances and had made her get out and walk. I offered to take her home, and she accepted. She didn't say much on the way. When we got there, I got out and came around to open the door for her, but she was gone. I couldn't understand it and went up to the house and rang the bell. When an elderly lady answered, I asked for Mary. "Not again," was all she said. I said, "What?" And she explained that Mary had been killed in a car wreck. I was about the fifth person in eight years that had tried to bring her home. It sure shook me up knowing that I had driven a ghost around. I just hope that poor girl gets wherever it is she's going.

MT. OLIVE VERSION: "The Ghostly Hitchhiker"

Collected in April 1970 by Pam Phillips of Mt. Olive from Ken Blaylock, also of Mt. Olive; accession number 1970-5-15 (18):

There's an old underpass in Jamestown, North Carolina, where, I don't know how long ago, but I imagine, oh, fifty or a hundred years ago there was a young lady killed there. There, ah, there's an underpass under a bridge, and since then they've built a new underpass about a hundred yards to the right of it. But at the time the ah . . . the ah . . . highway ran under the train track at this other, this other . . . ah . . . underpass, and this girl who had supposedly been to a dance and was . . . ah . . . dressed in an evening gown, I think, and she . . . ah . . . was on her way home in High Point, and on her way home right at this underpass a car had wrecked and ran over and killed her, and since this time there have been several people who have reported that on a foggy, dreary, dark night, as they were coming down the highway, and as the car comes around the corner, the headlights flash over into the other underpass, and it's a real spooky setting, and they have seen this girl there and have stopped and offered her a ride to wherever she was going. And she has actually gotten into the car with them, and talked with them, and they have driven her into High Point and taken her to the address that she has given them, and when they'd get out of the car and go around to the other side to let her out, and ah . . . they'd open the door and she wouldn't be there. She'd just disappear. And my home is about two, a mile and a half or two miles from here, and I've been by there late at night many times and I have never seen her. But there have been people who have; have taken her home like this and she'd just disappear. One person has . . . ah . . . I've heard, went to the door of the house and ah . . . got someone up. I think it was her mother and ah . . . asked them if ah . . . she had a

daughter, and ah . . . she said she did, but ah . . . her daughter had died ah . . . several years ago, and ah . . . that she was buried, and this man asked . . . ah . . . you know, where her grave was and everything, and he just couldn't believe that she was dead, and so he went to the grave to find out for sure, and when he ah . . . went there later that night, I guess . . . ah . . .he found her cape or part of her dress laying on the grave that she had been wearing earlier that night when he had picked her up.

WHEAT SWAMP VERSION: "The Vanishing Hitchhiker"

Collected in April 1970 by Cleo Mooring of Tarboro from Earl Hill of Wheat Swamp near Kinston; accession number 1970-5-12 (1):

I want to tell you about the one my son-in-law saw. This is the one; he didn't believe in ghosts. He didn't believe in such things as that. In other words he never has called me a lie because he has too much respect for me for that. I could tell by the way he looked and acted that he didn't believe it. But this woman rode with him.

He was an insurance salesman, and he was living in Raleigh, and he was going down to Wilmington—had been down to Wilmington, rather. Had been checking on a salesman down there. And he always kept the doors on his car locked—keep anybody from getting in. Because if he had to stop at a stop sign or something, anybody could jump in his car if the doors were unlocked. But if he kept his doors locked, they'd have trouble getting in.

So he was coming on back from Wilmington, and he got to Goshen Swamp, and it felt like one of the doors on his car opened. And he looked around to see what had happened, and there was a woman sitting there beside him. And she had on this white suit. Not a white dress, a suit. More or less like a sweater and a skirt, probably. She had a black pocketbook. Well, this black pocketbook—he had white upholstery in his car, and this was just a shining.

He asked this woman—it got away from him so bad—he said, "Lady, do I know you?" She said, "No, but you will soon." He didn't know what that meant. He didn't know if it was a man probably dressed in woman's clothes to try and rob him. He didn't know if he had left a door unlocked in Wilmington. He didn't know what had happened. He just couldn't believe his own eyes. So he asked her what her name was. She said, "Mary Lou" or "Mary Lee." He didn't get the last part.

He asked her then if he could take her some place, and she said, "No." She just decided to ride a little ways. She'd get out directly. Well, it got away from him so bad, he didn't know what to do, and he just couldn't believe his eyes. And so die, if he wasn't going to see if it was just, was real. So he put his hand on her leg. He felt of her leg, and it felt like somebody's leg, but it was just as cold as a

piece of ice. And she turned around and kinda faced him, and her face looked kind of talc colored, and he could tell it was not human. Her face looked kinda different, colored. Didn't–looked just like human, normal, like a corpse's face. It looked like tears running down her cheeks. He got down there two or three miles, said it seemed to him like twenty miles. He got up there by the church. Said the door felt like to him that the door opened again. And she just vanished. She just went out, and she left her pocketbook by itself.

So he was going to open it at the first filling station he came to. He stopped at the first filling station, and they had closed up. New Year's Eve night, you know; and they had closed up about 8:30. He did use the telephone, and called home, and told his wife he'd be home directly. If his company came, just tell them to come on in, and he'd be home directly.

So he hung up, and went back, and got in his car, and the pocketbook was still in it. The next town he came to was Clayton. When he got to Clayton, he said he knew somebody would be opened there at Clayton, and he was going to open that pocketbook and see what just was in it. So he got right to the city limit, and the pocketbook went "swhee" and it just vanished and went out of there. And he never opened it. I would have opened it. I have just enough curiosity that I would have opened it. There might have been some valuable information.

The folktale "The Vanishing Hitchhiker" is identified internationally as a narrative development of Motif E332.3.3.1. This tale has already been printed and studied in other variants in a number of books and articles. The reader who wishes to pursue this tale further would do well to begin with Chapter Six, "The Ghostly Hitchhiker," in Louis C. Jones' *Things That Go Bump in the Night* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1959), pp. 161-184. Jones' book contains in addition to a very interesting account of the New York variants of the tale a bibliography of earlier studies of the tale.[3]

Any reader of *North Carolina Folklore* who knows an additional version of "The Vanishing Hitchhiker" is invited to submit it to the author of the present article in care of the Department of English at East Carolina University for inclusion in the ECU Folklife Archive.

NOTES

1. For more details of the place of this folktale in modern American folklore see Richard M. Dorson's *American Folklore* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959), pp. 249-250.
2. In addition to this Arlington, Virginia, version, accession number 1971-2-23 (11), the ECU Folklife Archive has among its holdings the following five additional non-Eastern North Carolina versions:

Alexandria, Virginia, accession number 1969-11-13 (17); Apex, North Carolina, accession number 1969-11-13 (7); Burlington, North Carolina, accession number 1969-11-13 (19); Durham, North Carolina, accession number 1969-11-13 (26); and Liberty, North Carolina, accession number 1971-5-17 (87).

3. The following works should be added as a supplement to Jones' bibliography: Mary Washington Clarke, "Jesse Stuart Reflects Kentucky Lore of Tokens and Ghosts," *Kentucky Folklore Record*, IX: 3 (July-September 1963), 41-46; Richard M. Dorson, "The Hitchhiking Ghost Nephite" in *Buying the Wind: Regional Folklore in the United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), pp. 506-507; and James A. Shope, "Ghost Tales and Legends, Mainly from Eastern Kentucky," *Kentucky Folklore Record*, XII: 1 (January-March 1966), 41-58.

THREE TAR HEEL FOLKTALES

by Grace Matlock

EMOTE-CONTROL HEALING. Horses and mules developed lampas, an infection of the gums and roof of the mouth which caused the afflicted animal to be unable to chew corn. Mountain folk called it lampers.

One day a farmer thought he would speed the recovery of his mule by splitting the swollen gums with his pocket knife. The mule had been pulling a plow all morning and was hot and sweating. In addition, she was already in a weakened state from her illness.

To the man's horror, the mule's gums bled more profusely than he had expected, and he became increasingly nervous as the blood continued to pour from her mouth. As the poor animal staggered and sank to her knees, he told his young son to run across the field to a shack inhabited by an old woman who, it was said, could stop blood.

** *Mrs. Matlock (1440 Cherokee Road, N. E., Marietta, Georgia 30060) is a native of North Carolina. She has published poems and short stories in numerous Southern periodicals.*

The boy raced up to the porch where the woman was seated in a rocker taking a dip of snuff. "Pa said for you to come quick," he panted. "Our mule's got lampers—she's bleedin' and we can't get it stopped!"

The old woman continued to rock. "What's the mule's name?" she inquired casually.

The boy stared. "Her name's Beck," he said impatiently, "but Pa said for you to come right now."

She glanced up at the mid-day sun. "Ain't no need for me to go over there. You run on back. She won't be bleedin' no more by the time you get there."

He turned and trotted back across the field. The mule had risen to her feet and the blood was drying on her mouth. Her gums never bled again, and she recovered to pull a plow for many years.

(This story was told to me by my sister-in-law, Vinnie Matlock McGaha, of Franklin, North Carolina.)

DREAMS OF AN INDIAN CHIEF. Shortly after the first plume of smoke rose from the chimney of the white settler's cabin, the old Indian chief arrived at the door. As the settler's wife prepared breakfast, her husband sat near the fire across from the chief, vainly struggling to make conversation with his guest.

The white man, convinced of the purpose of the Indian's visit, was playing a delaying game, but at last he lapsed into silence. The old chief stared into the flames, then as usual, related the same story.

It was the custom in his tribe, he insisted, that if a person dreamed that someone had given him something, then that person was honor-bound to fulfill the dream by giving him the object he had dreamed about.

The white man wondered uneasily what the Indian chief wanted this time. Last week it was one of the pots hanging over the fire; the week before that, the cloth on the kitchen table and his watch fob. As he saw the chief studying the brooch on his wife's blouse, the settler spoke up hurriedly.

"Last night," he said, "I had a wonderful dream myself. In this dream, you gave me all of that tract of land that lies between this cabin and the creek. I was glad to see you at my door this morning because I know you understand how important dreams are, and what must be done."

Without changing expression, the chief stood up. After a few minutes of silence he said, "You dream of land—I give you land." He moved to the door, where he paused. He gestured toward the settler, then toward himself. "But you—me—we not dream anymore."

(My father, William H. Martin, a native of Hayesville, North

Carolina, told me this story when I was a child. He had enough Indian blood to make him eligible to live on the Cherokee Reservation. Instead, he came to Georgia where he married Lillian Grogan, a girl of Irish descent.)

THE BRIDE AND THE PANTHER. A young bride, lonely for her family, had traveled on foot from Jackson County across Cowee Mountain to pay a visit. On her way home she remembered that she had promised her husband she would start home early enough to arrive before dark. Arrayed in one of her best dresses which swept the ground in those days, she picked her way carefully over the rocky, seldom-used mountain trail. She glanced down with pride at her crisp embroidered apron which had been much admired by her mother and sisters, and hugged the white shawl to her shoulders.

Her shadow lengthened as the autumn sun sank behind the chestnut trees. Regretting that she had delayed her departure from her family's home, she quickened her step. Then terror gave wings to her heels as she heard the unmistakable scream of a panther.

Fleet as a deer, she raced along the mountain trail, heedless now of briers and undergrowth that snagged her new dress. As she heard the panther coming closer, she snatched off her apron and, as she ran, she tied several knots in it and tossed it to the ground behind her.

When the panther saw the apron he stopped and tore it into ribbons, evidently thinking something was inside it.

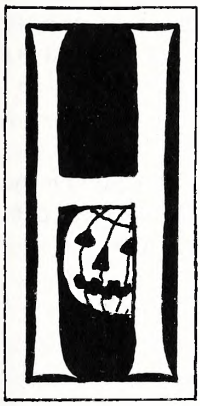
Next the young bride removed her shawl, tied knots in it, and threw it behind her. After the panther had clawed it into shreds, she repeated the process with material torn from her skirt, then from her voluminous petticoats. Each piece of material slowed the panther enough to enable the young woman to reach home, screaming, as she beat on the front door.

Her husband, hearing her cries, dashed out of the house with his gun and killed the panther as it attempted to climb a tree in the front yard.

(This story was told to me by my sister-in-law, Vinnie Matlock McGaha, of Franklin, North Carolina.)

ALL SAINTS' DAY AND HALLOWEEN

by Joseph D. Clark



alloween, one of the strangest of holidays, has had a diverting and circuitous development from ancient times to the present. In view of the ebb and flow of innumerable customs, its celebration may be described as pagan and Christian, religious and well-intentioned, weird and eerie, ghostly and grisly, necromantic and damned, diabolical and fiendish, awesome and wonderful, hair-raising and nerve-racking, mischievous and prankish, romantic and blissful, festive and exhilarating. The terrifying aspects of it, once so evident to believers and nonbelievers, are now mere shadows. Nowadays rollicking youngsters observe the eve fearlessly and with hilarious make-believe.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ALL SAINTS' DAY. To understand, in part, the significance of Halloween (based on the word "hallow" and also known as Hallowe'en, All Souls' Eve, All Hallows' Eve, Holy Eve, Vigil of Hallowmas, etc.), it is helpful to recall that the Roman Catholic Church officially established All Saints' Day (known also as All Hallows' Day, Hallowmas, Hallowday, etc.).

Some historians speculate that the festival honoring saints was initiated when Pomona, a mythical Roman goddess of fruits and flowers, was thus acclaimed at the beginning of the northern winter in pre-Christian times. The evidence, however, indicates a much later establishment. For example, Pope Boniface IV instituted a feast on May 13 in 609 or 610 as a tribute to St. Mary and the martyrs, and in the eighth century Pope Gregory III(731-741) dedicated an oratory for the saints in Saint Peter's Church and fixed November 1 as the time of the festival. At first only a few worthies were included, but in 835 Pope Gregory IV (827-844) extended the observance to embrace all saints, known and unknown.

Although All Souls' Day has sometimes been thought to occur on

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** *The author (15 Furches Street, Raleigh 27607), professor emeritus of English at NCSU, is a regular contributor to* North Carolina Folklore.

November 1 instead of November 2, credit must go to Odilo (who died in 1048), the Abbot of Cluny, France, when he directed his subordinates in many monasteries to celebrate it on the latter date to intercede generally for the souls of the dead.

Since the Reformation the festival of All Saints' Day has been celebrated on November 1 by Roman Catholics, numerous congregations of Anglo-Catholics of the Church of England, and for a limited time by Lutherans, who no longer include it in their calendar. The Greek Orthodox Church celebrates a similar feast on the first Sunday after Pentecost. Most Protestant churches, however, know very little about the festival and never observe it.

PREVIOUS TRIBUTES TO THE DEAD. Despite the solemn intentions of the Catholic fathers, their celebration of All Saints' Day was affected by earlier customs of memorializing departed souls on the Day of the Dead in the Mediterranean world. For instance, in Egypt during the winter solstice a special tribute was made to Osiris, the god that symbolized the death of vegetation. The people there believed that at this time the souls of the dead returned to their earthly homes, being guided by oil lamps that burned all night so that they might arrive safely in quest of prepared food. In Greece the people observed a three-day Dionsyiac feast in February: on the first day they opened casks of new wine, on the second day they attended a large banquet and engaged in drinking contests, and on the third day they dedicated the "feast of pots" to supply the returning ghosts of the dead with much food. Despite such generosity, the Greeks feared these spirits, closed their temples, and smeared their doorposts with pitch to keep them out. In Roman areas a feast of remembrance was held in February, from the 13th to the 21st, when they placed wine, milk, and honey on the graves of the deceased, in addition to large quantities of sweet-smelling flowers such as violets and roses. Like the Greeks, the Romans did not trust the spirits of the dead and thus sealed their temples against them.

DRUIDIC (CELTIC) INNOVATIONS. Though somewhat indebted to the Romans during their sweep across Europe, the mysterious Druids put a new wrinkle in celebrating the dead. For about two centuries before the Christian era they lived in Gaul and later in the British Isles, particularly in Wales, Ireland, and Scotland. They mildly worshipped the Roman Apollo, Minerva, and Mars, but they mightily adored the Sun God. And then they created a local god, namely, Samhain, the Lord of Death, to whom they paid homage at the end of the harvests and the beginning of winter, on November 1. They believed that, on the eve of this day, Samhain assembled all the souls that had been condemned to inhabit the bodies of animals during the last twelve months. They further held that on this eve the souls of the dead were

most likely to come back to their original homes and there demand food and shelter. They also felt that all sorts of supernatural beings were abroad on this night, such as goblins, devils, ghosts, elves, and big fairies. And when the returning spirits of the dead ordered the earth-bound to provide them food and shelter, they had better be hospitable in order to receive a blessing. If they refused, they would be the victims of spells, havoc, and damnation. Such demands from the dead were the magical forerunners of the jovial modern directive "Trick or treat!"

This sort of fantastic devilment caused hair to rise and spines to tingle among all elements of society, from the commoners to the powerful in church and state. Those who had read the Bible remembered King Saul's consultation with the Witch of Endor before the battle with the Philistines and could recite with cold logic that passage in Exodus (22:18), "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." This was the gospel truth, so they thought, and they proceeded to apply it with vengeance to the suspected—the queer and the lonely and the neurotic. With the hue and the cry coming from all kinds of lips, including numerous high churchmen and state officials, an alleged sorcerer didn't have much more of a chance than the proverbial snowball in hell. Almost thirty witches and wizards were tortured and hanged in or near Salem, Massachusetts, and it has been estimated that about 40,000 were executed in England. This grim process, a travesty of justice, had to cease. And it did with public enlightenment and due procedures of law.

NUTCRACK NIGHT. Undoubtedly many persons, especially the adventurous young, were becoming disgusted with a celebration of Halloween with the primary emphasis upon the macabre and fiendish. By the end of the eighteenth century, ghosts and goblins and witches had lost much of their fearful imaginary influence. To a host of young men and women they were just so much trumpery to be toyed with in a harmless and decorative manner on the periphery of a good time. This trend is noticeable in Robert Burns's "Halloween," a memorable and delightful account of the way the Scottish people had a good time without scaring the daylights out of the folk.

Both in Ireland and primarily in Scotland, the Halloween in the traditions of the past was no longer hallowed. The peasantry had reduced the holy day to a ripsnorting holiday, generally called Nutcrack Night. On that night roistering lads and lassies from the villages and farms assembled in many homes to make merry. And whoop it up they did. While they sat before open fires, they held hands, drank hot ale, ate soul-cakes (buns covered with currants), gulped liquor and sometimes too much, listened to funny and ghastly yarns, and played games before jaunting off to the countryside and occasionally to a barn loft.

These annual assemblies of youth were for romance and especially for love divination. To illustrate, a teenager with his hands tied behind him tried his skill at catching with his mouth an apple in a tub of water, If successful, he would be served more ale and always get a luscious kiss from a girl. In another apple contest, with hands tied behind his back he attempted with his mouth to catch an apple suspended from one end of a whirling stick, at the other end of which was a flaming candle. If again successful, he received more ale and kisses.

The most delightful aspect of the pastimes was the burning of nuts and the pulling of cabbage stalks to predict the course of their love affairs, as well expressed in Burns's poem: "To burn their nits and pou their stocks." For example, a girl would write her own name on a nut and then the name of her lover on another nut, and then placed them near the grate. If only one nut burned, it was a sign of rejection. If the nuts cracked and jumped, it was a token of quarrels and unfaithful married life. If the nuts lay still and turned toward one another, it was a sure sign of blissful marriage.

These young people also attempted to divine the future by yanking kale or cabbage stalks ("stocks") out of the soil, preferably that of a neighbor or stranger. If the stalk was tall and straight, the future mate would be strong and healthy. If the stalk was slender and crooked, the puller would be a hunchback or sickly person. And if the roots of it were clean, the future spouse would give nothing but true love. By testing the pith of the stalk, the lovers would discover that if the pith was tender and sweet they would be gentle and kind, but that if the pith was sour or bitter they would be hard to live with. If by chance they pulled up a stalk of oats, it was a forecast of lost viginity that merry night. This last prediction might occur when some warm-blooded lass caught up with a bounding lad who scattered hemp seed in the open fields, notably after loud entreaty from him.

At the end of these festivities, usually about midnight, the participants would be treated with a big meal, after which they started the old-time bonfires, which the ancients had instituted to burn the bones of heretics, to singe evil spirits and rout them, and to show their tribal or local patriotism.

LOVE DIVINATION IN NORTH CAROLINA. Some of the love divination which the British cherished, such as the eating of red apples and then viewing in a mirror their future husbands, penetrated our nation during and after the coming of the colonists. And North Carolina, too, received an ample share of the popular beliefs of the Old Country. The following examples (as recorded in the *Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore*, Duke University Press, 1952-1964) show that some of the fairly recent youngsters of this state resorted to magic, playfully or otherwise, to predict the future

course of love:

If you stand in front of a mirror at twelve o'clock on Halloween, the man you are to marry will look over your left shoulder.

If on Halloween you take a mirror and walk down the stairs backward, you will see in the mirror the person you will marry.

On Halloween night, if one holds up a candle and looks in a mirror, the face of one's future husband or wife will be seen.

Look into a spring with a lightwood torch at midnight on Halloween and see the face of your future husband (or wife).

Look into the well at eleven o'clock on Halloween Day and your future will be disclosed.

On Hallow Eve, if an egg placed in front of the fire by a young woman in love is seen to sweat blood, it is a sign that she will succeed in getting the man she loves.

On Halloween, children used to put corn meal by the side of their beds, and then ghosts would write with it the name of the man each was to marry.

HALLOWEEN IN AMERICA TODAY. Here in North Carolina and in many areas of the nation, some business enterprizes amply prepare the public for the celebration of Halloween on October 31, and some homemakers demonstrate versatile talents in displaying the ancient motifs of the festival. In newspapers, shops, and living rooms, they make great use of the traditional colors—black, orange, and red—to recall the monstrous spirits of a diabolical past. With no desire to harm a soul, they regale you with an assortment of skinny broom-riding witches with sharply pointed hats and noses. Upon the witch may be perched a very black cat, known to be the familiar of all sorcerers back to the time of the evil Hecate. Now and then they may include some leathery bats and a few spiders with wonderful webs. If that is not enough, they may arrange lurid cauldrons in which witches stir their brews for the Macbeths and other notorious folk. And they never ignore the jack-o'-lanterns, made to look like big turnips or pumpkins with slitted eyes and mouths, through which shines the red light of Jack, a mean and drunken sot, who was tricked by the devil to remain there and annoy all passersby.

The most charming aspect of celebrating Halloween in these times occurs when little children and teenagers come to your home on the eve of All Saints' Day. Usually they arrive at an early hour, never at the witching midnight. Merrily they approach the front door and rap sharply on the knocker. As you open the door, there you behold masked faces and an eerie display of symbols—witches, black cats, goblins, warlocks, and other spidery and batty creatures. And among them you may see little girls and boys dressed to resemble the traditional elves or the "little people" called fairies. Then someone booms out, "Trick

or treat!" You give what you have--nuts, candies, cakes, apples, and perhaps a few coins. With their treats in the bag, away they hurry for another treat down the lane or the street. If they do not get what they want, they may soap your car, turn over your benches, or tell the whole community that you are a damned Scrooge.

Oh, yes, a treat of make-believe, a much ado about nothing, that warms and nourishes the human heart. Just a figment of deep joy that flashes for a moment of reality and leaves you better--happy and unafraid like a trusting child.

REFERENCES. In addition to the use of the available encyclopedias, a reader will find the following texts authoritative:

John Brand, *Observations on the Popular Antiquities of Great Britain*. 3 vols. London: George Bell, 1849. Abridged editions have since been published.

Ralph and Adelin Linton, *Halloween through Twenty Centuries*. New York: Henry Schuman, 1950.

Sir James George Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1958.

Robert Chambers, *Book of Days*. 2 vols. London and Edinburgh: W. and R. Chambers, 1878(?).

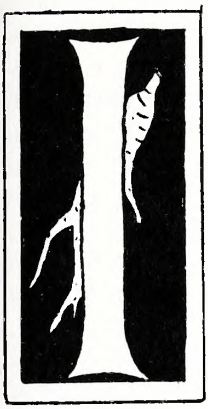
GARDENING ADVICE

Never plant on "bug days." These are the days of the month that are in the sign of the crab [Cancer]. Check your almanac to be sure. Vegetables planted on "bug days" will be pested with all kinds of insects.

–Harnett County informant
(*ex coll.* Leonidas Betts)

ON THE EFFICACY OF GINSENG

by Brian McClafferty



I was browsing through your latest issue at the library when I came upon the note about ginseng. While I would not attempt to write a "report" for publication, I would like to mention my experience with ginseng.

I began to take ginseng a year ago on the advice of a friend who had obtained it from a herbalist. Being somewhat suspicious of these people, I went to Chinatown to obtain mine. I was surprised to find that I had some trouble getting it, not because they had none, for the boxes were filled, but apparently because they chose to keep it for their regular Chinese customers.

I began to feel the effects of the root (a small piece of which I eat each morning rather than make it into tea, which is the regular procedure) after about two weeks. I sensed a feeling of well-being and good health which has continued till this day. I have had no colds or flu and haven't had a sick day for the entire year. This is very unusual, considering my performance until the time I began to use ginseng.

I regret to admit that I have not been subject to any surges of "sexual vitality." At least not any more than I had naturally. The reason for claiming this power for ginseng is, I gather, because it has a property which aids in the repair of cells, working mostly on the glands and particularly on the gonads, which play a great role in the sexual functions.

There are cases on record of people living to be approximately 150 years old after using ginseng every day. If I live that long, I'll write you a report.

There are three kinds of ginseng available here. The first, called "Canadian" ginseng, is a fairly young root, light brown in color and

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** *Last November (pp. 138-39) we ran a photograph and a brief note on ginseng, requesting readers to send us reports on any personal experiences they may have had with it. The address of the writer of this letter, dated March 28, 1972, is P. O. Box 246, Station F, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.*

quite fibrous, I am not sure of its medicinal effect, but it keeps you from getting drunk according to the Chinese, and research is being done on it at the local Drug and Alcoholism Foundation. The price is $2.50 per ounce. I gather that this is similar to the ginseng grown in Carolina.

The second variety, called "Chinese" ginseng, is the one I use and which has the properties mentioned. It is dark brown and very dense, shattering like glass when broken. The price is $4.50 per ounce.

By far the best ginseng comes from Korea. As you might have guessed, it is called "Korean" ginseng. This resembles the Chinese variety, but the root is quite a bit older and therefore somewhat denser. The color is the same as the Chinese, and it is rather hard to tell the difference if you are a westerner. I am used to eating the Chinese variety, and I can tell the Korean only by the taste, the same as the Chinese but stronger. This retails for $30.00 per ounce.

So I find it hard to imagine how the advertisement [from *Gourmet* magazine] that you reprinted can afford to sell ginseng at such a low price.

In a letter I recently received in Esperanto from Korea, ginseng (called Imsam in Korean) is prepared by boiling it with pieces of chicken until the chicken meat falls to shreds. The soup is drained off and drunk. The process is repeated again, just adding water and boiling, and drinking the water. This is done three times to get the full use of the root. Lately a simpler process of simply boiling in water with a little sugar or salt is used.

I hope this enlightens you somewhat and I am sorry that I can't tell you more about it.

HE CERTAINLY DID

by Grace Matlock
Marietta, Georgia

The day was as cold as a witch's smile
When they buried the banker Jim Gray.
His friends (if he had any) gathered to talk
Before they would "put him away."
"He was a mighty rich man," an old man said,
"He hardly spent anything a' tall.
I wonder how much he left, anyway."
His friend said, "He left it all."

LORE FROM HARKERS ISLAND

by William Dale

he major source of material for this paper came from Captain Stacy Guthrie, born on Shackleford Banks in 1881. Like his father before him, he has built boats all his life. His move to Harkers Island at sixteen was necessitated by severe storms which struck the sand banks. The five interviews with Captain Guthrie took place in or near his home, most of them on his front porch, where traffic noise accounts for interference on the tapes. The interior of his home was drab but well kept. The living room contained a couch, a table and chair, and a kerosene stove. The room was approximately ten feet by fourteen feet, and was lit by a bare bulb hung from the ceiling. The walls were unpainted plasterboard. There was no molding nor any fixtures on the walls. Captain Guthrie wore green work trousers and a white cotton shirt. He did not use power tools in the building of his boats because he lost two fingers on his right hand from a homemade band saw. He spoke in a slow, raspy tone of voice, pausing frequently to gather his thoughts. He employed gestures only to explain something difficult to visualize. On occasion he would repeat the first part of a sentence and frequently used the expression, "Don't you know?" On the average, the interviews lasted an hour and a half, after which it became apparent that he had exhausted his voice. Rapport was easily established by asking Captain Guthrie to explain the process of boat building, and from

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** *The author, born in Philadelphia in 1952, attended Episcopal Academy there. "The project to collect folklore," he writes, "originated as an independent study project at the Academy." He had lived with his family at both Cherry Point and Camp Lejeune, and was familiar with Harkers Island. He was allowed to leave school and was on the island May 19-29, 1971. Tapes from his conversations are at the Academy. He entered the University at Chapel Hill in 1971, but writes that he intends following up his work. Used here are excerpts of his forty-page paper, written under the supervision of Angus K. Gillespie.*

there we moved to other subjects. He offered to prepare supper for me; however, I declined because it would be an inconvenience to him. In retrospect, I see that this would have put him more at ease. He graciously cooperated and told me in the last interview that the reason he enjoyed talking to me was that I did not use profanity. I believe that this factor, combined with a personal interest in him, resulted in my successful interviews.

Another informant was Mr. Walter Willis, who moved with his parents from Cape Lookout after Diamond City was hit by severe hurricanes. Four interviews took place in his modern home, with numerous appliances provided by his children. He needed no encouragement to talk, and he spoke clearly and in a moderate pitch. A number of times, Mr. Willis slapped his knee and stamped his foot when he was amused at a story he had told. I spoke with Mr. Willis in the morning, for he took naps of indefinite length in the afternoon. He made clear that he enjoyed company and offered his home if I would like to spend the night. I declined because I felt it would be too much of an inconvenience for a man of seventy-nine years. Because his mind had a tendency to wander and he would tell me a story two or three times, interviews never lasted more than an hour.

DOCTOR AND LITTLE GIRL. (Captain Guthrie, May 25, 1971.) My little girl had lung trouble and she caught the whooping cough. Well, the doctor come and look at her, and Doctor Davis of Marshallberg then looked at her. He says, "It's not worthwhile to go after me any more because I'll be frank with you. I can't do nothing for her. The child's got to die, that's all." Times was hard, money scarce, and I had to strain a point. And I tells my wife I a-going to the cape and take one set—one daylight set—and come straight back home. After I got to the cape, I turned around, and there was a streak of lightning in the northwest.

Well, it was in August, and generally the first shift of wind in August, schools of mullet [come] up. On the way in down there, I met a boat a-coming. A man said, "I come [to] the cape after you. Evelie's worse, and her mother is going crazy, frantic, and says for you to come home and go get the doctor." Well, Doctor George had told me wasn't no need to go after him, and that afternoon he had took his gun and went over to the banks in a cottage he had over there to spend the night and hunt some, you know. After he got there, he told me. . . . I'll go back to the other part first. I went. I didn't know he had gone to the banks. I thought he was still in his office.

Well, there was a man standing on the dock, and it was Doctor George.

I says, "Doctor, what are you doing here?"

He says, "I'm waiting for you." He says, "How's the little girl?"

I says, "Doctor, she's worse."

He says, "I went over to the banks a-hunting. After I got over there, they was some kind of instinct or knowledge that told me I was needed. And I turned right around and came back."

Well, I took him to the house and he went into the room and looked at her. Never said a word to nobody, walked right on out the house, never applied no medicine or nothing. He went right on down to them thick woods right down there, little path that went down there, kind of a hog path. Lied down, concealed himself there in that path, and I watched him. Got down on his knees and prayed. Stayed in there about five minutes, come on back, and went there to the room, took her temperature, turned around with a smile on his face, and says, "The little girl's going to be all right."

And the wind shifted. The mullets run in the morning. Everybody was out in the sound so as I didn't know where to go. So I just pulled my anchor, sat on top of the cabin. Just as the sun rise, saw a fish hawk, saw that fish hawk come out of the woods and make a slope, and when he did there was a strap of fish. Prettiest school of mullets you ever saw. That day in three hours, he paid me one hundred dollars. A thousand pounds of fish. (A285.0.1 Angel of lightning. R131.0.2 Rescue of children.)

DEVIL FISH. (Captain Guthrie, May 28, 1971.) In other countries I've heard sailors say that they've gone on anchor crown and ships . . . anchors. And the next morning they'd be at sea, gone at sea. And when they find out what it was, it was a devil fish. It would go down, don't you know? and get under there and undermine his anchor. Take that anchor, and it's got horns, right like a chop make, don't you know? Take that in her chop there, and tow them away. I've heard sailors tell it. I've never seen it. (B548.2 Brings lost object from bottom of sea. G303.3.3.5 Devil as fish.)

WHALE DESTROYS BOAT. (Captain Guthrie, May 20, 1971.) Was a boat, there was a boat wrecked one time. The way she wrecked that . . . the whale raised the boat was ahead of her, and then she shoved her head out of the water. When she shoved her head out of the water, that was she was in a fighting condition. She didn't mean to do that. When she shoved her head out of the water, she shoved it right on up across the boat on the inside until she saw what she done. She pulled her head back and pulled side the boat out. (G322.1 Giant fishes for ships.)

WOMEN SALUTE WHALERS. (Walter Willis, May 27, 1971.) In

the whaling days and all that, all the women would stand on the beach, salute the boys when toss oars. They'd kill the whale. Then they'd take the bonnets off the beach, hold them up.

ENTERING WHALE'S MOUTH. (Captain Guthrie, May 26, 1971.) A whale had been beached. I was a small boy. They was shore on the beach, and they was wrecking it–taking the blubber off of it. Had took the bone out of the mouth. The mouth was wide open just like opening the door. Had to prop it open to get the bone out, don't you know? out of its mouth. And the mouth was wide open just like the entrance of that door there. And brother William Henry had me by the hand walking around showing me the whale, tied it that a way and left it bare dry. Walking around the carcass there, and come to its mouth. He picked me up and threw me in the whale's mouth. Right inside. I struck on the whale's tongue, and I went slip. And, boy, when I got a head on me and I come out a screaming, I'll tell you that. I ain't never told that. People wouldn't believe it, but it's so. (B541.1.1 Swallows man to rescue him. K565.1 Boy swallowed by fish escapes when it is cut open.)

MONEY LIGHT. (Walter Willis, May 27, 1971.) Heard my daddy say so–here a place between here and Diamond City called Crag's Rock. It's an oyster rock, but it's a big long one. They say a many a night they had got ready in a pilot boat, a sail skiff they see, a light burning on this rock, and they claimed it was a money light. And they'd head for it, and as sure before they got to that money light, that light was burning on the end of that rock, a storm would strike and they couldn't make it, and they had to go back to the banks. Every time, they'd break an oar, they blow the sail off of her, or do something. Something would not let them get to that light. (J2348 Will glow if buried. N532 Indicates hidden treasure.)

BLACKBEARD'S DEATH. (Captain Guthrie, May 28, 1971.) I remember one story about a man named Blackbeard they called him down at Ocracoke. They said–I don't know if it's so–they caught him and cut his head off, and they say his body swum around the boat three times. I don't believe that, though. (F1041.14 Man swims beheaded. F1041.14.1 Sailor swims beheaded.)

BURIED TREASURE. (Captain Guthrie, May 26, 1971.) The beach sand over here on this wooded strip, over here to Shakleford Point, that–that was a mile across of cedars and myrtles and mulberries and pines and everything. And the big sands come right on across them trees. You see a little twig of a cedar twig sticking out of

the sand, and you go think you can pull it up. It's a big tree, big as that one standing there. Sands built up on it. Go there, pick it, pull it, see if you can pull it from the roots, but you can't pull it up. It's the top of the tree standing up where the sands come right on across here, a mile across. (F948.5 City buried in sand.)

GAME OF CAT. (Walter Willis, May 27, 1971.) We used what we called a cat stick, used in them days. Now you call it a baseball bat. You play cat just like you play baseball, has the bases. (A1495.1 Origin of ball game.)

TWO CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS. (Walter Willis, May 28, 1971.) Old Christmas on Diamond City—they used to celebrate twice a year. Once on the twenty-fifth of December, and again on the fifth of January. (V72 Christmas.)

CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS. (Captain Guthrie, May 20, 1971.) When Santa Claus came to see me, you know what he brought me? A penny stick of candy and some molasses cakes that my mother cooked. I sat right there and eat afore I went to bed—just as much as I could hold, and then to bed. The next morning I'd get up and there'd be my stocking —hang up my stocking for Santa Claus. There'd be a package of these hardtack—you know these hardtack—a cap pistol, might be a cap pistol. Santa Claus used to bring everything. (N816 Bringer of Christmas gifts.)

THE VISION. (Walter Willis, May 28, 1971.) I used to have to help my wife Blanche out of bed in the morning, couldn't get up out of bed, had arthritis, bad feet. So this particular morning, her—she come. I said, "Blanche, you must be feeling a little better, ain't you?" She never said a word to me, never opened her mouth, just went right on in that kitchen long enough to get one of them pills, come right back by there, never opened her mouth. And it worried me to death. I never had seen her walk directly. She went right on, and the time she got in bed, I heard her breathe about three times just as hard as if you're doing for your life, and yonder I went. I was already awake, clothes on.

"Blanche, I'm going to call the younguns, the children. Tell me something. What's the matter?"

She was stone dead.

One morning I look and here she comes again. She done been buried.

I say, "Blanche."

She done that way, she said, "I'm feeling better. I'm all right." Then she vanished.

It relieved me a lot to hear her say, "I'm all right."

(M341.1 Prophecy: death at a certain time. E166 Return from death certain time.)

GHOST APPEARS. (Captain Guthrei, May 28, 1971.) The other night when you was here, I was a laying on the bed and I heard the screen door. Someone was at the screen door. Well, I got up and went out to see who it was, and it was my wife Kate. She was standing there just as plain as I see you. Her hair was parted down the middle like she done, and she was wearing that plaid dress. And I says "Kate," and I run over to her and fell on my knees and went to touch her.

And she says, "Don't touch me. I'm not home yet." Then she says, "Why are you still here?"

And I says, "I ain't been called yet." And then she says, "You will be soon." And then she vanished, and I woke up and was still in bed. It was a dream, a vision. (A666.2 Why ghosts remain on earth. D1855 Time of death.)

EXPLANATION OF THE MOON. (Captain Guthrie, May 28, 1971.) That moon is God's and he put it there. And that moon, before the end of time, will turn to blood. (A764.2 Drops of moon blood. F961.3.1 Moon turns to blood.)

CHANGE IN WORLD. (Captain Guthrie, May 28, 1971.) The world has never once stood for two thousand years. There'll be a change when it's two thousand years, or before. The change, He didn't ever say. (A1011.3 God's promise not to destroy world by water.)

LOVE

Love's a little thing
Shaped like a lizard,
Runs around your heart
And jumps through your gizzard.

—Children's rhyme from
Harnett County, N. C.
(*ex coll.* Leonidas Betts)

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NORTH CAROLINA FOLKLORE

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NORTH CAROLINA FOLKLORE

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* * *

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* * *

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NOTES

The Sixtieth Annual Meeting of the North Carolina Folklore Society (its first meeting was on March 24, 1913) will be held at 2:30 on Friday afternoon, December 1, in the Virginia Dare Ballroom of the Sir Walter Hotel in Raleigh. President John Foster West and Secretary-Treasurer Harry C. West have lined up an especially intertaining program of games and music. Details of the program will be mailed to all NCFS members about three weeks before December 1. Last year, a heavy snow descended on Raleigh at the time of the meeting, and many members were prevented from attending. This year the Farmer's Almanac promises clear, bright weather.

With the first issue of 1973, *North Carolina Folklore* will become the *North Carolina Folklore Journal*. The words "North Carolina folklore" were quite sufficient when the magazine was founded in 1948, but the locution has since been used in so many contexts that it no longer adequately denotes a publication. In lists of abbreviations of scholarly journals, too, *North Carolina Folklore* has often been confused with the quarterly *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, to whom we now graciously award the initials as the sole property of that prestigious publication. We hope you approve the change, which was decided on last May 20th when the President of the Society met in Raleigh with the co-editors of *NCF* and ex-Presidents Joseph D. Clark, W. Amos Abrams, Richard Walser, and Ruth Jewell.

One August afternoon this past summer the Elder W. J. Barber came by to show us a handsome split-oak basket made by the Elder Lonnie Mayo Whitaker of the Free Union community in Martin County. The Elder Mr. Whitaker is eighty-one years old and has practiced a number of professions during his long, full life. At present his basket-making is part of a project made possible by a two-county grant from the North Carolina Arts Council to the Washington County Civic and Charitable Association, Inc., and the Martin County Action-Economic Development Section. Regretably, many such folk crafts are dying out, even in our rural areas. We hope some young person will be able to learn the art from the Elder Mr. Whitaker and preserve it for another generation. (Unfortunately, a Polaroid photograph of the craftsman and some young observers was not clear enough for reproduction in *NCF*.)

Last April, Mrs. Mary Chiltoskey spoke on Cherokee legends and traditions to members of the Western N.C. Historical Association.

VISION FROM LITTLE PISGAH

by Glenn Tucker

Any one living on a mountain side is fairly certain to have reveries. They fuse into visions of what is transpiring in the blue haze of the far-off timberlands, or on the peaks, cloud girdled by morning, standing sharp and vigilant when bathed in autumn moonlight.

My reveries are journeys from the history books along my walls into the alluring and chancy realms of the may-have-beens. Often past midnight, I sit on my upstairs porch that looks out toward the Charlotte-Asheville highway where it debouches from Hickory Nut Gap, a road rich in history, wealthy in tradition, beckoning always to those who love to dwell with the curious, the whimsical, the inexplicable.

Many personages distinguished in earlier days come down in my fancy: Nolichucky Jack Sevier, Henry Clay, Millard Fillmore, tough Andrew Jackson no doubt, for the highway bears his name; Samuel Carson coming for his duel with Dr. Robert Vance, along with Davy Crockett, his second; controversial Tom Clingman, and Zeb Vance himself, rated by many the greatest of the North Carolinians. Among them I see the short, stout figure of Lew Wallace with his flashing eyes and gray chinwhiskers, who, though author of the religious novel *Ben Hur*, was an old soldier who could emit oaths for twenty minutes without a repetition. Why does Lew Wallace come to this remote fastness? Did he not write part of *Ben Hur* at the Esmeralda Inn at Bat Cave, just across the gap? Tradition and Foster A. Sondley, for both of whom I have strong affection, say he did.

** *Winner of three Sir Walter Raleigh Awards for nonfiction, the Buncombe County author (Filibuster Hill, Sugar Hollow Road, Fairview, N. C. 28730) has written, among many other titles,* Front Rank: The Story of North Carolina in the Civil War *(1963) and* Zeb Vance: Champion of Personal Liberty *(1965). A biography of Mad Anthony Wayne, American general in the Revolution, will be published next year.*

There are pictures by night on my roadway, the old trail the tribesmen used in passing from the boulder-strewn upper reaches of the Broad River on the Atlantic Ocean side, to the brook across the divide that ripples beneath me on its way to the French Broad and surges eventually into the Tennessee at Knoxville and on to the Ohio and Mississippi.

But what is this that again and again intrudes into my blurred vision? It is the shadowy outline of a long procession. At first it seemed stationary, but now it moves. No, these are not Indians–not the Shawnee who come at times to assail the Cherokee at the lookout point on Soco Gap, nor the Cherokee themselves, returning from incursions eastward. I was baffled indeed as I observed this strange pageant amid my musings. Again, as I looked, with the tranquillity of night broken softly by an owl up the mountain, whose querulous warbling made an eerie lullaby, I seemed to see my ghostly tableau in greater detail. Yes, it was a procession, including Indians, but they were in the rear. In the moonlight that bathed the valley, I fancied I could catch the glittering of burnished Toledo steel, of armor, shields, and heavy coats of mail. I see the jaunty challenge of crested helmets, the morions that told me this was no latter-day march of colonial Carolinians under Rutherford going to invade the Indian lands, nor coon-capped frontiersmen returning west from a work well done at Kings Mountain.

My interest warms as my reverie deepens. Do I not have in a room downstairs the William H. Prescott table, across whose scuffed surface I can often see tiny Aztecs battling the mounted conquistadors, the white gods of Cortez, or the unhappy Incas beaten by Pizarro, as Prescott may have written on this very surface? Pizarro? The tableau seems to near me, just as the television screen draws in for the close-up. This is not Pizarro, but a more stately, more compassionate man, Pizarro's chief lieutenant, handsome and tall, who bears in his garb and carriage the marks of immense wealth, and in his mein the aura of leadership.

He is indeed the greatest and richest of the conquistadors, the nobleman of Estremadura, the scholarly graduate of the University of Salamanca, brother-in-law of Vasco de Balboa, Governor of Florida, the first white man to penetrate the interior of America, Hernando De Soto. His fortune of the 180,000 gold ducats he took out of Peru is secure in Spain to give comfort and the noblest of luxuries, but he still seeks what he needs least–gold. Though more than twice a millionaire by pre-inflation standards, he has gathered and equipped an expedition of 600 foot and 120 horse, and with it and his Indian carriers he is coming out of the Blue Ridge.

But is not all of this a hallucination? Did not De Soto follow

the waterways farther west, and not penetrate the Blue Ridge? That is what most of the scholars of his journey have concluded. That was the finding of the commission appointed under President Franklin Roosevelt to ascertain his route. But De Soto came for gold, and the Indians told him he could find it in the mountains. Gold was, in fact, east and not west of the Blue Ridge. Once this piedmont area east of the Blue Ridge made North Carolina the largest gold-producing state of the union. Surely the reports De Soto got about gold would tell where it was instead of where it was not. Why would the Indians deceive him and win his punishment? Not the Indians, but the Spaniards lusted for gold, which meant so little to the tribesmen that they had scraped only softly into the great resources of present Cabarrus, Mecklenburg, Rutherford and other counties that were to yield tens of millions of dollars in diggings and washings and merely plucking out the nuggets.

So the De Soto scholars who had nothing much to go on except postulations might be wrong. After the halt of the Spaniards on the Savannah River at present Augusta, the trail grows dim. Yes, my strange, weird caravan is moving yonder, perhaps a thousand or more men, weaving in and out among the trees, leaving the mainroad at times to follow closer to the rivulet—the old Indian trail would have done that—easing along a specterlike and uncanny, gliding, gliding, gliding.

In daylight it seems like a dream that is trying to flee my memory, to vanish and be forgotten, but I haul it back. Then a major test occurs to me. What did Foster A. Sondley, Asheville seer, bibliophile extraordinary, scholar of a past generation who was objective in all things save hatred of Abraham Lincoln, whose magnificent library of 45,000 volumes, many rare, comprises the Sondley Reference Library of the Pack Memorial Library of Asheville—what did Foster Sondley say about De Soto? I went to his paper about Hickory Nut Gap written long ago, and there, behold, was the authentication, the bare, bold statement that I would not dare to challenge. Yes, Foster Sondley says De Soto came down out of the Blue Ridge through Hickory Nut Gap!

So wrapped in the comfort of the Sondley confirmation, I sit on my upstairs porch when the moon beams and am transported back to the year 1540. In my reverie I see that strange burnished column flashing Toledo steel; with its morions and basinets, its lances and arbalests, a glittering troop passing toward the Swannanoa and French Broad, on through where the towns of Franklin and Highlands now stand, on into Georgia, through Clarkesville, and across to the Tallapoosa and along the Alabama River to Mobile, whence it would again veer northwestward to the bluffs that are now Memphis. Visions,

visions, visions,–dreams, dreams, dreams. Now I feel I can see Hernando more vividly than I can the little Aztecs and conquistadors who play across my Prescott table. I need no further corroboration than what I get from Sondley and the fairyland view from the slope of Little Pisgah Mountain to be satisfied that De Soto came this way.

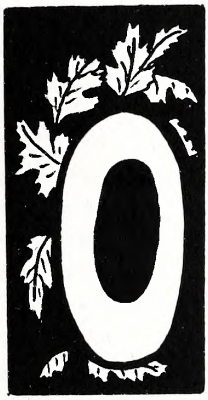
NEW BOOKS

NORTH CAROLINA BLUES. Wilton J. B. Bastin, a teacher from England currently studying for a master's degree in folklore at UNC-CH, has recently published the first book about North Carolina blues. The monograph is called *Crying for the Carolines*. Its premise is that the blues of the region from Richmond to Atlanta has a distinctive "sound"–that it is unlike the better-known Mississippi and Texas blues styles. His book discusses the singers active in Atlanta, Greenville, Spartanburg, Charlotte and Durham, with particular attention to Blind Boy Fuller, who was born in Wadesboro but lived mostly in Durham. *Crying for the Carolines* was published by Studio Vista of London in 1971, one of the volumes in Paul Oliver's Blues Series. Because of contractural difficulties it is difficult to obtain the book in the U.S.A. The Intimate Bookshop in Chapel Hill has a few copies. The book may be ordered from the following British firm: Blues Unlimited, 38a Sackville Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex, England.

DOWN IN GEORGIA. Eliot Wigginton, editor of *Foxfire*, is to be congratulated for *The Foxfire Book*. It is very rare that a book of folklore becomes a bestseller, but Mr. Wigginton and his high school students at Rabun Gap, Georgia, have turned the trick (over 300,000 copies sold and still going strong), winning high praise from *Life*, *Time*, and *Saturday Review*. Based on interviews with old-timers in the mountains of Georgia and North Carolina, this collection can be recommended to all our readers–especially the chapter on how to make mountain whiskey. This book is perhaps the most heartening publishing event of the year: it proves that not all students are turned off by the past and by the classroom. The National Endowment for the Humanities should send Eliot Wigginton on a lecture tour across America; his message should be heard throughout this land.

THE FLIM-FLAM MAN AND THE DIAMOND CAPER

by Guy Owen



f all my adventures with the Flim-Flam Man, I think the grandest dodge was when old Mordecai won the hearse in a crap game with a pair of beveled dice. Then, lo and behold, we soon found out the coffin was loaded to the scuppers with Mason jars of moonshine—because this colored so-called undertaker we'd tied into was only a bootlegger in disguise. Talk about falling in the outhouse and coming up smelling of roses!

When I saw what was in that coffin, I bust out, "Water for the well of the saints!"

The old chiseler allowed the beatup hearse was just what we needed: locomotion. The first chance we got, we stopped off and bought a supply of paint and brushes. Then we painted it a nice shade of blue. Mordecai lettered on both sides The Wages of Sin Is Death in a gaudy red, and under that: Moody and Sunday. Then we dressed up like two evangelists and tooled around the back roads of North Carolina plying the skin trade and spreading a little joy with the "spirits" out of our coffin. Every time a backwoods chump would lose a little in a game of three card monte or smack or tat, or bought some fake jewels or one of our fancy gold-lettered Bibles, I'd donate him a jar of shine free gratis to help take the sting out, so to speak. We soon discovered our coffin medicine was right negotiable, too. Of course it ought to be: that tanglefoot was so strong you could smell the feet of the boys who'd plowed the corn.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. For straight off we found a use for the whiskey in a little diamond caper. The truth is, we couldn't've worked the trick without the coffin varnish, and I'm still

---

** *This episode appeared in neither of the author's folkloric novels about Mordecai Jones,* The Ballad of the Flim-Flam Man *(1965) and its recently published sequel* The Flim-Flam Man and the Apprentice Grifter *(1972).*

grateful to Booker T. Jackson, though I don't guess he'd want to take credit for it.

Of course, we wouldn't've dreamed of trimming this sapsucker if he hadn't went to cheat Mr. Jones first, which wasn't good judgment on his part. Fact is, it was like old Captain Arab hooking that white whale, who turned out to be right hard to land. It transpired at a filling station across the Tar River, the first place we stopped to gas up.

What the filling station man did, after putting in ten gallons of gas, before Mr. Jones could tell him we never needed any oil—he checked it and said the old hearse was two quarts low, which is what his stick showed. Of course, I'd noted he never let the stick fall clean, but held it up with his thumb. Then he pretended he was putting in two quarts, only the cans were empty, don't you see?

It's an old dodge, and slick operators pull it on tourists all the time. But it got my dander up, him taking us for such ignorant greenhorns. Anyhow, the station man never took note of me, never even saw me, so I wised up Mr. Jones to the gyp before he went in to pay.

It didn't set too well with my pardner neither. Fact is, he wasn't his usual genial self, sort of mopping at his bald streak with a monogrammed silk handkerchief. His oyster eyes sort of smoking, he allowed it was a shame to see a man jeopardize his soul for less than a dollar.

"This one-gallus sharpie needs a little lesson, Curley."

"You're not just whistling Dixie, Mr. Jones."

The old chiseler whispered to me to keep out of sight, then he fished a diamond ring out of his satchel and put it on. Tipping me a wink, he took out his wallet and strolled in the station to pay for the gas, and the oil we never got.

I couldn't hear it all, naturally. But I soon see Mr. Jones flashing a hundred dollar bill, which the mark changed, a shrewd-looking slim fellow in greasy coveralls and a tan canvas hunting cap.

But didn't Mordecai Jones put on the dog and act like Mr. Greenbacks? Why, he lit up a fifty cent stogie with his engraved Ronson and flashed the big diamond about until they struck up a conversation about gems and the Flim-Flam Man bragged about the value of his ring, which he vowed he wouldn't swap for the Hope diamonds all put together. And the chump's eyes shone like a junebug's belly when he took in the glitter of the monstrous rock.

When the old chiseler slid back under the wheel, he didn't do anything but drive around the block and pull up at a phone booth, maybe a hundred yards from the station. While my pardner was looking up the number, he yanked out the fake diamond and tossed it to me, explaining my part in the caper. What I had to do wasn't much. Any

fool could do it, so I reasoned I'd be fine at it and throw in a few extra flourishes, as usual.

While he was dialing the number, I got ready for my part of the scheme, which is where the spirits in the coffin came in handy. Tousling my hair, I ripped a few buttons off my gray work shirt and half tore off one pocket and rubbed my eyes with my knuckle until they were red as a possum's butt in pokeberry season. Finally, I fished out a jar of the embalming fluid from the coffin and took a big snort and let some spill down my shirt, then had another little nip, using the back of my hand for a chaser. It was sure enough wedge-floating whiskey, stronger then sheep dip. Then I just sprinkled it over my shirt like it was baptizing water.

By the time Mr. Jones had got the winchell on the phone, I made the loveliest and smelliest sot you'd ever hope to see. I smelled stronger than the possum toddy Pa used to make out of persimmons. He'd drink anything, he wasn't particular—so long as it wasn't milk or water.

Mr. Jones says, "Hello, is this the Gulf station? Well, a terrible thing has happened. I've lost—" and his voice broke like he was coming unhinged.

"What's that now?" I hear the gasman say, gritty-voiced.

"I was just there ten minutes ago, the gentleman with the diamond ring. . . ." He seemed to break down again and there was a long pause until the Gulf man got impatient and said he had a customer to attend to and couldn't waste time on the phone talking to strangers.

But when Mr. Jones told him he'd lost the stone out of his ring and it must've been when he was gassing up, there was more silence —this time from the other end. The old snake oil peddler let the information sink in good, then he cut in and went on about how desperate he was, since the ring had been in his family since the days of Queen Anne and he'd hoped to pass it on to his grandson, Mortimer. "You understand the terrible predicament I'm in, and naturally there's a handsome reward."

"How much might that be now?" All of a sudden, the apple on the phone sounded interested as hell.

"Well, naturally a thousand dollars would be the least I. . . ."

Mr. Jones nodded at me and I didn't wait to hear him spin the rest of his grand rigamarole, though I would've got a big kick out of it, I'm sure. It was the first time I'd witnessed such a caper. I put the fruit jar of white moon in a paper sack and tucked it under my arm, flinging my guitar over my right shoulder. Then while my pardner was holding the mark with his smooth patter, talking thirteen to the dozen, I walked back to the station, Mr. Jones's pearly grey Stetson pushed back on my head.

When I saunters around the corner, the lanky man on the phone looked out through the window and spied me. I saw there wasn't any customer now, so I went into the blind staggers, the worst kind, lunging and reeling and weaving and I don't know what all, this cock-eyed grin on my snout. I hadn't seen anything so drunk since our sow got in Pa's cider and tried to walk on ice. Sort of mumbling to myself, I stumbled into the gasoline pump, then ricochets off and bounced into a big stack of paperwrapped tires.

I canted my eye at the station man, and you've never saw anybody so torn-down disgusted. His nose was turned up like he was breathing the wind off a polecat with halitosis.

I waved to hook his attention—then all of a sudden I wasn't staggering anymore. No, I just stiffened like a boxer that's been creamed and is about to go down, all the time staring at the cutglass I'd just planted in a grease spot by the service pump. It took me a right good while to pick it up, I was reeling so. Finally, I just fell on it and my guitar hit the cement with a bang. But when I rolled over and set up, I had the fake gem, all smiles. When I held the big diamond up and the sun caught it, it glittered like a wad of fish scales.

Then I let out a little whoop and leaped up, stumbling into the station door, my lips moving, but no sound coming out.

I almost broke out laughing and rumbled the whole caper, the gasman was in such a swivet. He was holding the phone, his face pale as a biscuit, not saying a word. For a minute everything was as silent as the coming of night.

"Hello," I hear Mr. Jones say. "You still there, Gaston?" His voice sounded right anxious.

"Look what I found, mister."

Quick as a whippet, he turned his back and whispers, "Hold on there now. I'll be blamed if some drunk ain't just found your big diamond out front and—"

"Well, for God's sake don't let him walk off with it, whatever you do. Please, friend."

"What'll I do, man? I, I—"

"Look at this shiny thing, mister," I cut in.

"Do? Why, I'd think a man of your intelligence would know what to do. Get it away from him and be damn quick about it."

"But how?" the hooked apple whines.

"Look. I just told you I'm offering a thousand dollar reward. You offer that soused redneck a hundred and hold the stone until. . . . But make it snappy. I'm leaving now."

The winchell set the phone back on the hook and wet his thin lips. When he turned to face me square, I could sense the larceny

percolating in his veins. Here was something with more profit in it than selling empty cans of motor oil. His eyes were shining like a man's will shine at a sexy woman or a new convertible.

"What you got there, cowboy?" He took off his hunting cap and brushed his red hair back, acting casual. His lean face was blotched with freckles, him about as pretty as the north end of a south-bound mule.

"I found this diamond by that gas pump yonder."

I sort of rolled it out on the palm of my hand. He started to snatch it, but I jerked it back, kind of sobering up.

Then he ventured it wasn't a diamond, only a fake, and made out like he wasn't much interested in diamonds nohow.

"You might be right, mister, but I'll soon find out."

I headed towards the door, allowing I'd take the stone to the jewelry shop for an appraisal.

"Wait a minute," his voice raised a notch. He was trying to stare me out of countenance.

"How come?"

"You wait a minute, boy. I'll give you twenty-five dollars for that there thing."

I just shook my head, stubborn as an iron-headed mule.

"All right, damn it. I'll offer you fifty dollars and not a red cent more. You understand?" His splotched face was flaming up.

"No, sir. You might be right."

"What do you mean, you likker-head–"

"That what you said a while ago. It might be a fake and I wouldn't want to cheat you."

He just snorted and said to his notion it was only so much glass, but it would be worth fifty dollars to him to have some fun with the boys at the American Legion Post.

"Hey," I bust out. "I got a idea. If this thing cuts that pane of glass there, it's the genuine article."

But when I went to tap the glass, the rascal grabbed my arm and I made out to drop the stone.

He scooped it up, quicker than a rooster grabs a grain of corn. "I've got it, by damn." His fist closed on it like a steel trap and his speckled face warped in a grin.

"Go ahead," I say, "try it on that glass."

All he did was walk over to the cash register and pull out a wad of bills.

"You can take that or leave it," he says, scowling.

"Why don't you go ahead and try it?"

He was counting out the fifty dollars into my palm.

"That the way you want it, huh?"

"That's the way I want it." He looked at me like I was the trash of the earth.

"You might be cheating yourself," I say.

"I'll take my chances on that."

Just then the Flim-Flam Man drove up in a great rush and slammed on brakes. I set the jar of redeye by the cash register, so the mark would get some value out of his little investment. (Mr. Jones called that gesture our signature.)

"You better clear out of here now, cowboy." All of a sudden the station man seemed to be in a nasty mood. "I don't allow any drunks to hang around my place of business. If you don't git, I'll call the police on you."

Mr. Jones hit the horn and I staggered to the door. Then I strolled over to the disguised hearse, as sober as a Quaker. I slid in and turned to wave at the gasman.

And wasn't his face a right interesting study though? He just stood there with the fake diamond in his hand. When it broke in on him how we'd taught him a little lesson in greed, he looked like he'd took a dose of quinine.

When me and Mordecai Jones busted out laughing, the filling station chump was still standing there with his bare face hanging out. He was studying his diamond as big as a nest egg, shaking his head like he couldn't digest it all. Which I'll wager frosted his balls.

Then we scratched off, burning the wind.

OUT ON THE GREAT PLAINS. Another book that has come to our desk is Roger Welsch's delightful *Shingling the Fog and Other Plains Lies*, published by Swallow Press. This is a collection of tall tales of the plains, most of them from Nebraska, grouped under such headings as "rough weather," "strange critters," and "hard times." Not surprisingly, many of these same yarns have been spun by Tar Heel folk; for example, "A farmer was plowing corn with a team of mules. It got so hot the corn began popping. The mules thought it was snow, so they froze to death."

POETRY FROM THE SOUTH. Alice Moser Claudel's "Southern Season," which was published in *North Carolina Folklore* last year, is the title poem of her new collection of poems, just published by the Appalachian Studies Center at Pikeville, Kentucky.

A FOLK STORY FROM IRELAND

by Louise Robertson Booker

ettlers coming to America from Ireland brought with them their fairy lore. One story, handed down from generation to generation, is rather farfetched, but I am writing it here exactly as it was told to me.

"One day, years and years ago, a fearful storm was raging. An old gentleman was gazing at the turbulent waters of the bay near his home when he saw a frail raft floating by, and on it was strapped the figure of a woman. He called one of his servants, and they hurried to the beach. When they arrived there, they found on the raft a very beautiful woman. She had the appearance of a refined lady. The old gentleman fell in love with her and asked her to marry him. She consented on the condition that she be allowed to go away, without being questioned, for a few days each year to visit her friends.

"The condition was accepted, and they were married. The lady disappeared annually for a few days and always returned at the appointed time. It soon became noticeable that, whenever she was away, her apartment was haunted by a large rat. But it was such a gentle, harmless creature that it was unmolested. The strangest thing about the rat was that it seemed to have a great fondness for the old gentleman, and followed him all about the house. He appreciated the peculiar animal liking him so much, and he made a pet of the rat.

"A big dinner was given to his friends. Among his guests was a man who suddenly caught sight of this immense rat, and not knowing that it was a pet, drew his sword and made a terrible gash in the animal's neck. It ran out of the room. It seems that just as the blow was made, a loud scream came from the bedroom of the gentleman's wife. Everyone rushed to see what was wrong. What a terrible sight

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** *Mrs. Booker (204 East Liberty Street, Williamston 27892) has written two books of folklore:* Historical and Traditional Tar Heel Stories from the Colorful Central Coastal Plains *(1968) and* Ghosts and Witches of Martin County *(1971).*

met their eyes! There, lying on the floor, was the beautiful lady with a gash on her neck exactly like the one the rat had received.

"Many people believed that all this happened on account of some bad fairies. They thought the strange woman was a girl who had offended the bad fairies in some way, and her punishment was to turn her into a rat."

HILL HUNGER

by John Foster West
Boone

Lem Catlett had one pretty gal
along with all the ugly ones.
Sissy joined the WACs, then, magically,
she became an air stewardess
and married a Texas oil man,
the way such stories should turn out.
The couple visited Bull's Branch finally
in a pink limousine upholstered all
inside in unborn calfskin,
on the radiator a great span
of Texas longhorns running before.
They had to walk the last quarter mile,
the Ridge Road being too narrow
for their magnificent chariot to pass.
They took old Lem and Bess back
with them to Texas for a rest
(Lem had already rested sixty years).
Lem and Bess stayed one week, then rode
an express Greyhound back, hill-hungry.
"That country's flatter than a damn
flitter," old Lem lamented.
"A feller couldn't piss peaceful
in his own back yard without
he was seen way over yander
in Oakliehomie,
or some other furreign place."

HAMLET V.ii: THE GEMLORE OF THE PEARL IN THE WINEGLASS

by Robert B. White, Jr.

One of Shakespeare's favorite themes, as critics are fond of pointing out, is the startling and often shocking contrast between appearance and reality, between what seems to be and what is. In *Hamlet*, for example, we see an erratic prince claiming sanity and pretending madness; an apparently fond mother, affectionate wife, and "most seeming virtuous queen," who actually is engaged in an incestuous marriage which began in adultery before her husband's death; and a king who has every mark of an efficient public administrator and a loving husband, but who, in reality, is an "incestuous . . . adulterate beast" who can plot the murder of his wife's son with the same devious coldness with which he has already murdered his own king and brother. And motivating the entire action of the play is a ghost who may be angel, devil, or, perhaps, exactly what it claims and appears to be, the spirit of the deceased King. This sort of contrast, however, is by no means confined to the major characters and issues of the play; in fact, one of the most remarkable aspects of Shakespeare's artistry is the way in which this favorite theme permeates even to the most "innocent" details of a play like *Hamlet*.

In the final scene of the play, in which Hamlet and Laertes engage in what is intended to appear as a sporting event but which is in reality a treacherous assassination plot, Claudius again, and for the last time, attempts to disguise his true feeling for Hamlet. "Set me the stoups of wine upon that table," he commands, and each time Hamlet scores a hit the "King shall drink to Hamlet's better health," and the kettle-drum, the trumpet, the cannon, and the very heavens themselves shall announce, "Now the King drinks to Hamlet." Two stoups of wine are set on the table before the royal couple, one from which King Claudius will drink Hamlet's health and the other, according to a pre-arranged plan, to be poisoned and given to Hamlet in the

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** *The author, professor of English at North Carolina State University, is an eighteenth-century specialist as well as a folklorist.*

heat of his exercise, if Laertes fails to touch the Prince with his poisoned sword. Thus, what appears to be a royal compliment is in reality a second line of attack in the assassination plot. Moreover, Claudius announces that, "in the cup an union [pearl] shall he throw / Richer than that which four successive kings / In Denmark's crown have worn." Several lines later, after Osric has judged a hit for Hamlet, the King drinks to the Prince from one cup and casts the pearl into the other, set out for Hamlet: "Hamlet, this pearl is thine; / Here's to thy health." It is the folk associations of this apparently innocent if flamboyant gesture on the part of the King, the casting of the immensely valuable pearl into the stoup presumably to be dissolved by and consumed with the wine, which reinforce the central theme of the play and are of present concern.

George Steevens, in his 1773 edition, seems to have been the first of Shakespeare's editors to suggest that the pearl, or *union* as it was also called, was the King's means of introducing the poison into the wine, and subsequent editors have accepted Steevens' interpretation. The pearl, presumably, was hollow, and the poison it contained would be released when, as the Elizabethans thought, the acid of the wine dissolved the outer shell. That wine will not dissolve pearls is less important than the fact that our ancestors thought it would. Naturally hollow pearls are a possibility, for, according to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, when an oyster is attacked by a boring parasite from the outside "the mollusc protects itself by depositing nacreous matter at the point of invasion, thus forming a hollow body." This is, no doubt, the type of pearl that Thomas Usk had in mind when he referred in *The Testament of Love* (c. 1385) to the margarite as "a litel whyte perle, throughout holowe and rounde." Whether it was one of this natural sort or an artificially produced one, the hollow pearl provided Claudius with the means by which the wine could be poisoned quite overtly; indeed he commands attention to the very act of poisoning, which bears the appearance of an extravagant compliment to his intended victim.

But the plans of the plotters go awry. Gertrude's thirst leads her to drink from the poisoned cup before Claudius can prevent it. And although Laertes manages to touch Hamlet with his poisoned and unguarded rapier, the Prince forces an immediate exchange of weapons and touches Laertes in his turn.

As Gertrude dies and Laertes falls confessing the treachery, Hamlet realizes exactly what has happened. He stabs Claudius with the poisoned sword and then forces the still-poisoned cup to the lips of the wounded King, exclaiming, "Here, thou incestuous, murd'rous, damned Dane, / Drink off this potion! Is thy union here? / Follow my mother." The poisoned union, or pearl, in the cup of wine has

become a reflection of that other poisoned union, the incestuous marriage between Claudius and Gertrude, which has so contaminated and "sullied" Hamlet in his own mind. Hamlet's allusions to incest, to his mother, and to the "union" in the same context suggest that he recognizes the parallel. Thus the poison placed in the wine by Claudius is but an extension of the poisonous actions which have seeped throughout the play with tragic results for Ophelia, Rosenkrantz, Guildenstern, Polonius, Gertrude, and Laertes, as well as for Hamlet and Claudius himself at last.

In addition to this symbolic reflection of one of the central themes of the play, the poisoned pearl in the stoup of wine had other well-known folk associations which many of Shakespeare's audience must have noted and which also function to underscore the ironic contrast between appearance and reality in the play.

First, pearls and other precious stones were frequently employed for the detection of and as an antidote to poisons. According to Joan Evans, this was "the chief use of precious stones in the precarious days of the Middle Ages and early Renaissance." For example, in *Piers Plowman*, Langland alludes to "Orientales & eweages [pearls and crystals] enuenymes [venoms] to destroye." And Raphael Holinshed, one of Shakespeare's favorite sources, in his account of the death of King John, mentions various gems, including pearls, which were used in the detection of poison. Thus the pearl which should make the wine proof against poison and which appears to guarantee safety is in reality the very thing which makes it deadly poison, as Gertrude quickly demonstrates.

In addition to these supposed powers in the detection and destruction of poisons, pearls were generally thought to have medicinal virtues particularly appropriate in Hamlet's case. A pearl crushed or dissolved in water or in some acid solution such as wine or lemon juice was popularly regarded as an effective cure for insanity or hysteria. Again, according to Thomas Usk, one of the virtues of the pearl is that "it yeveth comfort to the feling spirites in bodily persones of reson. Another is good; it is profitable helthe ayenst passions of sorie mens hertes." Both of these conditions certainly apply to Hamlet. The *Peterborough Lapidary*, an important medieval compendium of gem lore, describes pearls as having "vertu of comfort by al kend þerof; . . . & helpe*n* aȝe*n* þe cordiacle passioun." A study of fifteenth-century lapidaries in the Bodleian Library by Joan Evans and Mary S. Serjeantson indicates that pearls were thought to give to the mind healthy or wholesome thoughts. On other occasions it was recorded that pearls had a wholesome effect, strengthening the heart, counteracting melancholy (Hamlet suffered from "melancholy adust"), and functioning generally as an antidote for many ills. Francis Bacon,

a contemporary of Shakespeare and a pioneer of early science, is supposed to have dosed himself with a mixture of powdered pearl and lemon juice. And a solution of ground pearl in distilled water was administered to Charles VI of France (1380-1422) "to restore his sanity, though in that case the cure is known to have been ineffective."

The explanation of the powers of the pearl in the cure of insanity, or lunacy, lies in the assumed affinities between the jewel and the moon. According to Joan Evans, Andrea Baccio, whose *De Gemmis et Lapidibus preciosis* appeared in 1603, "has no doubt that the stars which God in His wisdom has set in the heavens have a direct influence upon gems and endue them with supernatural powers; and he further attributes the virtues of each kind of gem to the influence of some particular planet or constellation; the moon, according to Baccio, controls pearls. George Frederick Kunz, in *Curious Lore of Precious Stones*, agrees that "the moon controls . . . the pearl." What, therefore, in appearance seems to be a kindly administered medication for the relief of Hamlet's melancholy madness is, in reality, no medication at all but a deadly poison instead. Again reality exists in tragically ironic contrast to appearance.

Thus the poisoned pearl or "union" reflects in little one of the major themes of the tragedy, the corrupting influence of the other poisoned union, that between Claudius and Gertrude, but is it considerably more. In two different ways the appearance of the pearl in the wine glass belies its reality, for it is neither a detector and neutralizer of poison nor is it a beneficent remedy for Hamlet's melancholy; instead, it is itself deadly poison. It is emblematic of the way in which appearance and reality contrast throughout the play.

WITCHCRAFT. The *Malleus Maleficarum* (Witches' Hammer) of Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger, two of the most famous Inquisitors of the late fifteenth century, is now in paperback (Dover Publications, 278 pages, $3.95), with lengthy introduction by Montague Summers, top twentieth-century authority on witchcraft. This work provides an indispensable background for those studying American folk beliefs in demonology.

FROM THE MINING COUNTRY. Another excellent addition to the shelf of books on the variety of American folk music is Archie Green's *Only a Miner: Studies in Recorded Coal-Mining Songs* (Univ. of Illinois Press, Urbana, 504 pages, $12.50), handsomely printed with out-of-the-way illustrations. Of special interest to North Carolina folklorists are notations on Paramount disc 3194 coupling the two songs "The North Carolina Textile Strike"(Gastonia, 1929) and "The Marion Massacre."

OWEN WISTER: OBSERVER IN NORTH CAROLINA

by Julian Mason

wen Wister is best known for his Western stories, including the famous *The Virginian* (1902). In all of them there is very good use of local detail which does much to create charm and authenticity. The availability of this local detail is the result of Wister's keen, on-the-scene observation, much of which is also obvious in his journals and letters.[1]

When Wister and his bride spent the first part of their honeymoon in North and South Carolina in 1898, that same eye for interesting local detail was brought to bear upon the Old North State. On their way from Philadelphia to Charleston by train, there was a brief stop in Rocky Mount. Wister reported to his mother: "At Rocky Mount a little darky played a strange & extraordinarily sweet and wild tune for us by blowing in a bottle & *singing between blows*!! I can give you no better idea of it than by comparing it to the spring chirping of crickets and frogs! He was an engaging rascal, and made me think of Puck and Reinecke Fuchs combined."[2]

After staying in Charleston almost a month, the Wisters went on to the North Carolina mountains, to Sapphire in southwest Transylvania County. Before returning to Philadelphia, they stayed at Sapphire from May 21 for about a month, with side trips to other mountain locales also. In his first letter to his mother from Sapphire, on May 24, he wrote:

> . . . it is 3300 feet. The place is composed of a small hotel, three cottages, a store, an office, & stables. We are in a cottage to ourselves, with two rooms & a sitting room with a fire place.

** *The author, professor of English at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, became interested in Owen Wister while he was Specialist for American Cultural History in the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress, where he worked extensively with the Wister papers.*

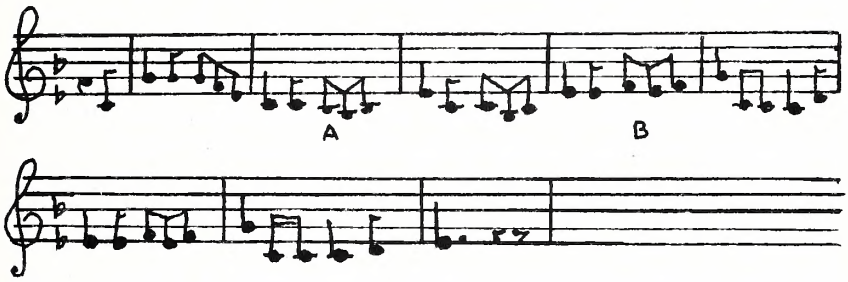
> No one else can occupy it for we have all the rooms there are. We have two tables, two rocking chairs & two other chairs . . . a jar of azaleas and one of laurel make the room pleasant. I don't think we shall light any fire. The season is far more advanced than we had been led to expect. . . . The leaves are broadly out, with a warm sun all through them, the dogwoods are just disappearing, the azaleas on the wane, & the rhododendrons showing bud. The place stands over a slanted clearing on the mountain, and lonely roads run up to it from the surrounding woods. Round a turn down the hill is a little lake of many bays and reaches, and from it one sees through gaps in the hills further hills beyond into the blue distance. A mile away is a larger lake where the new & very pretty hotel is building, soon to be ready. Our first day, Saturday, we rode round that lake, a 7 mile ride, on more than passable horses. . . . Monday we rowed on the near lake, and to-day we drove to the top of the mountain which is 5000 feet high, & from which one sees a whole country of ranges, & flat South Carolina & flat Georgia to the South. To the north one gazes at the Balsam Range, which is Vanderbilt's estate. The laurels are coming out visibly each day, and a new moon has begun very clear & bright. Within ten miles on various sides are a great number of waterfalls which we expect to visit, chiefly by riding.

In the letter to his mother on June 9, Wister showed his awareness of Mary Noailles Murfree's then popular local color writing about the Tennessee mountains, which she did under the pseudonym Charles Egbert Craddock. He commented that the region around Sapphire, though not on the Tennessee border, was "quite Craddocky as to 'we uns' & 'you alls' & the mysterious *h* in front of the word it." In this letter he again commented on the flowers: "You should see the flowers here now! In this room at this moment are two jars of pink laurel (it grows about 20 feet high & is inundating the banks), 1 jar of gorgeous flame colored azaleas, & one of queenlike white rhododendron, & one of a graceful white small clustered flower we don't know." At the end of the letter he said, "I must go to bed as in this air I don't sleep much after four or five & I *hate* bob whites!"

They thoroughly enjoyed most of their stay in North Carolina and found the air, rest, diversion, and exercise good for the frail health then bothering both of them. In fact they extended their stay a little longer than they had planned. Wister said he would "not exchange it for anything I can imagine."[3] Although Sapphire was their base, they did make trips to other areas of the mountains. Which ones are not entirely clear, but in his June ninth letter intentions are

mentioned concerning Whiteside Cove (in southwest Jackson County), Blowing Rock, Cranberry (in what is now north central Avery County), Lenoir, and Asheville. On the way to Sapphire they had gone to Hendersonville, Flat Rock, and Brevard.[4] A telegram to his mother on June 25 is from Johnson City, Tennessee, stating that they are about to board a train for home. So apparently they managed to cover a lot of mountain territory during their visit.

One may guess that they also visited Bat Cave during this period, for in the Wister Papers there is a holograph recording of the words and music of the play-party song "Hog Drovers." It is labeled "Bat Cave N. C. Henderson County." Although unfortunately it bears no date, 1898 is the most likely one from what I know of Wister's biography. It should be noted that Wister was an accomplished musician, having majored in music at Harvard and having at one time planned a career in music before this was changed at his father's insistence. He was praised by Liszt for both his composition and performance, and he never gave up an active participation in music. He would have been quite qualified to make a written record of music on the spot. Therefore, it is interesting that the music here recorded differs from that reported for this song by others I have consulted.[5] Here is the music in this version:



A note following this states: "The intervals A and B cannot be exactly represented on the piano. Interval A is intermediate between B and B♭." (Though the melody Newell reports is different from this one, his comments p. 234 are similar: ". . . none of the intervals are absolutely correct, and . . . the impression made on the hearer curiously resembles that caused by songs of North American Indians. The intervals could be accurately reproduced only by a violin, but in singing the effect may be gained by flatting the crossed intervals.")

The words given here for the song also differ slightly (probably a few local variations only) from those given in Lomax (pp. 399-400). Newell (pp. 232-233), Schinhan (pp. 517-520), and Brewster.[6] Here are the words in the Wister Papers:

Hog drovers, hog drovers, hog drovers we air
A-courtin' your darter so sweet and fair
And kin we git lodgin' here oh here
And kin we git lodgin here–

Now this is my darter that sets by my side
And no hog drover kin git 'er for his bride
And you kain't git lodgin here oh here
And you kain't git lodgin' here–

Your darter is pretty, yer ugly yerself
So we'll go somewhere's else to seek our wealth
And we don't want lodgin here, oh here
And we don't want lodgin here

Now this is my darter that sets by my side
And Mr _____ kin git 'er for his bride
And he kin git lodgin' here oh here
And he kin git lodgin here

There are no directions given here for this singing game which has so long been a favorite in one form or another for children and adults in Europe and this country, but presumably the same movements reported by others to fit the word indications of courtship and rejection would fit here too.

Another interesting facet is the recording of another specific location for this song, even though it has been cited before in the North Carolina mountains and elsewhere. (Brewster cites Montgomery County in 1922, Alexander County in 1927, Burke County in 1914 or 1915, Avery County in 1927?, Stanly County in 1927, Haywood County in 1920?, Catawba County ?, and Buncombe County in 1939 and 1920. Lomax cites central Texas in the 1880s, and Missouri p. 392 . Botkin cites Oklahoma, Kentucky, and Texas.[7] Schinhan mentions it as reported from east Texas and as having been brought there from North Carolina.) If 1898 is correct for this recording, it is the earliest I have seen for North Carolina (although a general chronological and geographical pervasiveness of the song is obvious).

The title, label, and musical transcription seem to be in Wister's hand, but the words appear to have been written by someone else, perhaps a local participant or informer. (The obvious haste seen in lack of punctuation and minor inconsistency makes it possible that the words were also written by Wister, but in great haste. However, I have seen handwriting he produced under various circumstances and do not believe this to be his.) One thing is clear, however, and that is that Wister was interested in the song.

As was mentioned earlier, Wister was a keen observer and recorder of local detail, which he put to good use in his writing. This included folk music. For example, his version of a Western song, words and music, is quoted by John and Alan Lomax in *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads*,[8] and a letter from Theodore Roosevelt used as frontispiece for this same volume cites Wister as an authority on cowboy songs. It is possible that he had heard "Hog Drovers" before on one of his Western trips. Or perhaps he had heard a similar song in England. More likely, the song itself simply attracted his attention as a bit of interesting local musical detail of the North Carolina mountains.

Wister wrote a novel about South Carolina, *Lady Baltimore* (1906). And in 1930 he looked on his associations with the South and wrote that he had found, wherever he had gone in the South, many people, both urban and "rustic," who were "the sort of people I was, with feelings and thoughts and general philosophy and humor and faith and attitude toward life like my own. . . ."[9] Presumably this included North Carolina too, and I wish he had continued his observations here and had also written a novel set in this state. I am sure it would have been accurate in detail and sympathetic in approach, and I am also sure it would have been a good one.

NOTES

1 E.g., see Fanny Kemble Wister, ed., *Owen Wister Out West: His Journals and Letters* (Chicago, 1958).

2 Letter to his mother from Charleston, April 24, 1898. This letter and others referred to below are in the Wister Papers in the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress. For permission to quote from them I am indebted to his daughter, Mrs. Frances K. Wister Stokes. *Reineke Fuchs* (1793) is Goethe's version of the classic fable of Reynard the Fox.

3 Letter to his mother from Sapphire, June 17, 1898.

4 Letter of May 24.

5 Jan P. Schinhan, ed., *The Music of the Folk Songs, The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore, Volume Five* (Durham, 1962), pp. 517-520 (gives 4 versions); Alan Lomax, ed., *The Folk Songs of North America* (Garden City, N. Y., 1960), p. 399; William Wells Newell, ed., *Games and Songs of American Children*, new ed. by Dover (New York, 1963), p. 232.

6 Paul G. Brewster, ed., "Children's Games and Rhymes," in Brewster, et al., eds., *Games and Rhymes . . . , The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore, Volume One* (Durham, 1952), pp. 94-98.

7 B. A. Botkin, *The American Play-Party Song* (New York, 1963), p. 85.

8 Revised and enlarged edition (New York, 1938), pp. 5-7.

9 *Roosevelt* (New York, 1930), p. 247.

FROM LONDON

Perhaps the most remarkable exchange publication to come to the editorial offices of *North Carolina Folklore* is the pleasingly formatted quarterly *Old Time Music*, containing this past spring such articles as "Georgia Stringbands," "Patsy Montana, the Cowboy's Sweetheart," and "Bluegrass Breakdown (A Basic Library of 50 LPs)." Promised forthcoming pieces include "Blue Ridge Highballers," "Legendary Fiddlers," and "Startling New Light on Jimmie Rogers." Two notable advertisements are for stereo albums entitled *North Carolina Boys* and *Old Family Melodies* sung by the Carter Family.

Not so remarkable, you say. But wait. . . . *Old Time Music* is published in London, England; and the advertisements cited are from Leader Sound Ltd., North Villas, London, and from Jurgen Feuss, Breman, West Germany. Judging from the magazine's contents, American Country and Western music is a lively interest, even in Europe.

Subscriptions to *Old Time Music* can be addressed to the circulation department, 33 Brunswick Gardens, London W8 4 AW. The rate is three dollars a year.

ABOUT OUR PRESIDENT

Society president John Foster West was featured in the August 1972 issue of *Southern Living* in its regular series "This Is Their South," complete with two photographs of Mr. West revisiting his childhood home in Wilkes County. The article, which calls Mr. West "this earthy, compassionate and talented man," states that he is nearing completion of a novel, the sequel to his *Time Was*, and concludes, "His . . . books of poetry and prose continue to communicate the life of the mountain people with authority and feeling." Well-deserved congratulations to our president. . . .

BAILES TIPICOS DE FOLKLORE IN THE SAHARA DESERT

by Richard Walser

mong words identical or very similar in practically all languages are *hotel, taxi, coffee, bar,* and others used by tourists everywhere. Other international words are the very English *football, beef steak,* and *folklore.* I was reminded of the world wide use of *folklore* last September when, on a visit to the Sahara Desert, I witnessed some "bailes tipico de folklore" (regional folk dances) in a tent among the sand dunes not far from El Aaiún, the tiny dusty capital of Sahara Español.

In my beach hotel at Las Palmas in the Canary Islands, I was handed a slip with the information that hardly an hour by air would land me in the desert at El Aaiún. There my group would be met and, according to the phrasing on the slip, we would "be scorted by a polyglot guide" to an oasis and thence to another spot for some "bailes tipicos de folklore." My main object was obviously the latter.

And so it was that, after wandering around the oasis drinking mint tea, we eventually arrived at a large tent elsewhere in the desert. Nearby, a camel, looking most disgruntled, eyed us suspiciously. The tent, we were told, was not one to be lived in, but a festival tent, a ceremonial tent, used for weddings and observances and celebrations. Each animal, for instance, has its own fiesta in the tent, and though I was never quite certain which beast was being honored that particular day, I suspected it was the patient, unhappy camel. In any case, we had earlier been eating camel-meat shish kebab. It was a bit tough for my taste.

At the tent we removed our shoes and left them at the entrance. Inside were beautiful rugs covering the sandy ground. At one side were some drums. We sat down in a semicircle on the rugs.

I listened to our "polyglot guide" as he gave his brief, vague explanation of what we were getting ready to see. He spoke in Spanish, French, German, English, and Swedish. I followed along as

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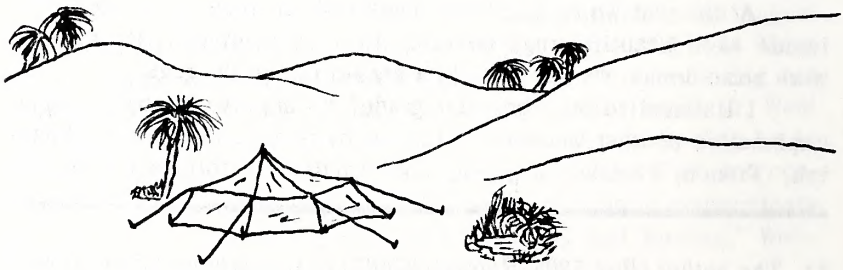
best I could, noting particularly his strong use of *folklore* in all five languages.

The dancers were black Mohammedans, not Arabs. The women were dressed in two heavy blue skirts and a flowing black blouse, with a black veil over the head. A Mohammedan pendant hung from the necks of some. They were barefoot, but wore heavy silver anklets. The lone man was garbed in a blue djellaba. His black turban, he constantly wound and rewound. Once he blew his nose on it.

The *bailes* themselves were simple swaying motions, with arms weaving back and forth to the accompaniment of the drums. Some half dozen women and girls, sitting in straight lines on each side of the drums, chanted unrecognizable words over and over again. One large woman occasionally made a shrieking rattle with her tongue. I have never heard anything like it, and have no idea how it was done. It was simply unearthly.

After the first *baile* by two of the women, the man and another woman enacted a coy, graceful encounter. The two dances went on monotonously for about ten minutes each. After a pause the man arose, ambled about, suddenly drew one of the women visitors from the audience into the center of the tent, placed a large black (magic?) necklace over her head, circled about her, and invited her to match his movements. To the delight of the spectators, he often jabbed her unexpectedly in the lower ribs. She screamed of course. Two other women underwent the same delightful excruciations. The fourth and last dance was a repetition by the odd-shrieking woman of the third dance. By now, the men who were pulled from the audience were familiar with the routine, and mischievously jabbed the black woman in the ribs.

From what I have read, I imagine the dances are related to the famous *guedra* performed by the Blue Men of southern Morocco, which borders the Spanish Sahara. By the way, the Blue Men (including women) are so called because of the color of the djellabas they wear to ward off evil spirits, not because of any skin tincture.



CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS FROM THE GERMANS

by Betty Sowers

ore than two hundred years ago, scores of European immigrants came to America to make a new way of life for themselves. Because many of them were seeking religious freedom, they found a haven in the tolerance of William Penn's colony, Pennsylvania. Predominant among these European immigrants were the Germans, whose country had become a battlefield for the religious wars between the Catholics and the Protestants. After the first German settlement was established in America in 1683, Pennsylvania became a haven for the persecuted Germans, who came by the thousands, seeking a new world where they could make a new life for themselves and their families. Although many small sects such as the Mennonites, the Amish, and the Dunkards or Brethren were attracted to Pennsylvania because of the religious tolerance of William Penn, the majority of the Germans belonged to three major denominations: the German Reformed, the Lutherans, and the Moravians. They called themselves *Deutsch*, meaning *German*, but this word was misinterpreted as *Dutch*, and many people, even to this day, associate them with Holland. Their descendents were to become known as the Pennsylvania Dutch.

When the best lands in Pennsylvania had been taken, the Germans moved southward into Maryland and into the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, where many of them settled permanently. Around the 1750s they began arriving in Piedmont North Carolina, settling mainly in the present counties of Alamance, Guilford, Randolph, Rowan, Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Stokes, Cabarrus, Stanly, Lincoln, Gaston, Catawba, and Burke–the region that makes up most of the prosperous, industrial Piedmont of today.

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When these Germans came to the Piedmont in the eighteenth century, they brought with them their beliefs and customs, their ways and traditions, the lore and legends from their old country, and they gave us many of the customs associatedwith one ofour most important religious holidays–Christmas.

Many of our most beloved Christmas symbols are a part of the heritage we received from the Germans. They gave us the Christmas tree, the ornaments we use on it, the candlelight service, the Advent wreath, and were partly responsible for Santa Claus.

The first Christmas tree was supposed to have been erected in Germany in 1608. The Germans originated the custom of hanging ornaments on the tree, and it was, according to legend, a German who invented the idea of lights on the Christmas tree. As the legend goes, Martin Luther was taking a walk one Christmas Eve and was so overcome with the brilliance of the stars that he went home and put lights on his tree to represent the glory and beauty of the stars above Bethlehem on the night of Christ's birth.

Our American Santa Claus is descended from the Sinter Klaas, or St. Nicholas of the Netherlands, and the Kriss Kringle of Germany. In Holland on December 6th, St. Nicholas' Day, the good saint brought gifts to the boys and girls. In Germany on Christmas Eve, Kriss Kringle was the bearer of gifts. Kriss Kringle was based on the lovely legend of the Christkind which originated in the Black Forest of Germany. The story goes that one cold winter night a woodcutter and his family were eating their meager supper when they heard a knock at the door. Opening the door they found a small child in rags, shivering from the cold winds. The family took the child in, fed him, and gave him a warm bed in which to sleep. In the middle of the night the family was awakened by beautiful music. When they went to the window, they saw the child standing in the snow, no longer dressed in rags but in gleaming radiance surrounded by a throng of angels.The child said, "I am the Christkind (Christ Child). Because you took me into your home and hearts, I will bring you a blessing. This little fir tree beside the window shall be my emblem." The family looked at their familiar fir tree and found it covered in silver nuts, lights, apples, and threads of gold. From that time on the Christkind travels all over the world bearing gifts for the children.

The legend of the Christkind probably inspired another ancient holiday custom brought over from the Rhineland to Pennsylvania and finally to North Carolina where it survived until the early 1900s. Almost every night during the Christmas season a group of young people dressed up in old clothes, and wearing masks or false faces, proceeded to go Christkindling. They visited all the houses in the neighborhood, wishing the inhabitants a Merry Christmas and in return

receiving a treat of apples or cookies. It was a custom very similar to our modern Halloween custom of trick or treating.

Many old folk customs and superstitions about Christmas have died out, but can still be recalled by a few. Among them is the belief that cattle speak on Christmas Eve and kneel down to say their prayers on New Year's Eve. Some believe that water in the wells turns into wine for three minutes on Christmas Eve and that the Christmas rose bursts into bloom between eleven and twelve on Christmas Eve.

Another custom that has not entirely vanished is that of visiting one's neighbors on Christmas morning. A few older people can still remember the Christmas trees in the church on which was hung a present for all the children. There are still in existence a few churches that "treat" their members with bags of fruit on Christmas Eve.

A rather strange custom associated with Christmas was that of the shooting of firecrackers on Christmas morning. Mine will probably be the last generation that remembers this as one of the fun times at Christmas. No one is sure of the origin of this custom, but it probably originated in the old country when the period between Christmas and New Year's was believed to be the time the witches came out, and guns were fired to scare them away.

LOOKING FOR CURES

by Betty Adcock
Raleigh

"For a grouch person, make a tea of violet blossoms."
Appalachian Home Remedy
The Foxfire Book

If magic flowered as it should
and I drank April, leaf and bud:
I would stay Witch.

Best turn to the tried and tougher
gunpowder and ugly sulphur
remedies for Itch.

MORE ABOUT DONNICKS

by Walter E. Meyers

he August 1972 issue of *North Carolina Folklore* (XX, No. 3), prints an appeal from Kern Lunsford, "Help Needed on 'Rosin the Bow.'" She had asked her father, Bascom Lamar Lunsford, for identification of the word transcribed as *donnicks* in the line "And then place me two little donnicks, put one at the head and the toe." He glossed the word as "colloquial for little rocks," and he was dead right in his definition.

Blame English spelling for the troubles of locating the word in reference works; under the spelling *donack*, the word is listed as an alternate form ing *donack*, the word is listed as an alternate form (in r-dropping dialects) of *dornick*. *Webster's Third New International* derives the word from Irish Gaelic *dornog*, probably, meaning a handful, or a small stone. The same source gives as the first definition, "a roundish stone or chunk of rock usually of a size suitable for throwing by hand." Those who followed the advice of the *Saturday Review* and held on to their second edition of *Webster's* will have more difficulty finding the item: *donack* is not listed there, and *dornick* is not to be found in the main word-list; it is at the foot of the page in reduced type.

Harold Wentworth's and Stuart Berg Flexner's *Dictionary of American Slang* (New York: Crowell, 1967) lists *dornick* as, simply, "a stone." They date the use from 1840, and refer to *A Dictionary of American English on Historical Principles*, eds. Sir William A. Craigie and James R. Hulbert, 4 vol. (U. of Chicago, 1938-1944). The word is not found (in either spelling) in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, and all sources that do list it confine it to American use, thereby giving a valuable aid in dating and locating the provenance of at least this version of the ballad.

** *The writer (2109 Oakview Court, Raleigh 27604), associate professor of English at North Carolina State University, is a linguist.*

MEMBERSHIP

NORTH CAROLINA FOLKLORE SOCIETY

Beginning this autumn, the printed memberships of the associated societies will no longer appear in the Culture Week program. Thus we decided to run our mailing list as of August 31, 1972, in this issue, though we do not plan to do so annually. If there are errors, do please send in the corrections.

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EPITAPH

by Lodwick Hartley
Raleigh

Tenderly cover with new snow
The bones of an old winter's woe.
The eyes were tired, the sockets burned,
The heart had slept, the ghost had yearned,
And all the rationed fury of the brain
Had vanished in September rain.

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